

# July



**BIBLE**  
DISCOVERY

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..... JULY 2025 .....

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possible.*

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# The Future

Many in today's world see their future integrally connected with their country. The rush toward nationalism as a healing agent for our problems is not new, however God sees the future in terms of His plan and will. It is not about our country, it is about our calling. It is not about our rights and liberties and abilities to do what we want to do, it is about the LORD accomplishing His desire for everyone through us. This may very well include helping our country, but it starts with God's will first and foremost.

Everything in this world – animals, plants, water, clouds, sun – are things created by the will of God for the greater good of human beings fulfilling their God-given duty. There is pleasure and satisfaction along with contentment in God's call on our individual lives. This is where Satan, the enemy of our soul, distracts us. He makes us think about what we want, not what God wants. Worse yet, at times he blends our wills together to make it seem like our own will is God's will. My friends, this should not be so.

As we move into the major prophets, it is interesting to see how God speaks to us today through ancient Israel long ago. Isaiah is the great royal prophet who frequented kings and leaders in the eighth century BC. He was focused on God's call to all people, Jew and Gentile alike. In fact, the book of Isaiah is often called 'the gospel of the Old Testament'. Isaiah 53, specifically, typifies this unofficial title. It is one of, if not, the most important passages for the Jewish people, which is why it is now called the "forbidden chapter" by many orthodox Jews today. Once you read it, you cannot unsee it: Seven hundred years before Jesus Christ, Isaiah prophesied explicitly about His death and sacrifice that was to pay the penalty of our sins.

Every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess: Jesus Christ is LORD! Praise God!



Rod Hembree, Th.D, DE.



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# How to use this Guide

Make the most of your devotional time with our Guide to the Bible in a year. Each Guide provides valuable context and theological insight to help strengthen your faith and dig deeper into the richness of God's Word every day.

The following three tips will help you make the most of your daily Bible reading and Guide:



## SPOTLIGHT ON...

In every Guide, you'll find a section with specific highlights from the perspectives of history, apologetics, theology, and more. These viewpoints provide a holistic context from which to view the month's Bible reading, giving us a greater understanding of the Word, and equipping us to grasp the impact of the Bible in these important fields.



## DAILY READING

The readings are in traditional order, with a date corresponding to the Hebrew calendar. Each reading consists of a daily insight and a focus on three major takeaways from the day's Bible passage. Challenge yourself to meditate on the *Discovering The Truth* and *Today's Prayer* sections as you go about your day.



## WATCH THE DAILY SHOW

Catch our companion TV series for even more valuable insight and theological discussion, hosted daily by the Hembree family. Join Rod, Janice, Ryan and Corie in this thirty-minute devotional show that will change the way you see and read the Bible. Visit **BibleDiscoveryTv.com** to watch our show online or to find a TV channel in your area.

# The Curse on a Cross

by Ryan Hembree



Isaiah 53, which is undoubtedly the most controversial passage in Judaism, contains some of the most stunning prophecies about the Messiah. For example, regarding this Saviour, Isaiah 53:5 declares: “But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.”<sup>[1]</sup> This, combined with all the other Messianic prophecies, was only fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth who was “pierced” through a horrible form of execution known as crucifixion.

“Since a tree caused the Fall, the Son of God [also] had to die on a tree as the second Adam to reverse the curse caused by the sin of the first man and woman”<sup>[4]</sup>? If so, it also follows that because it was our hands that stole from the tree, Jesus’ hands also had to be pierced. And His feet were pierced to fulfill the prophecy of Genesis 3:15 that the Saviour’s heel would be struck but in turn the head of the Serpent would be crushed. And Jesus’ pierced side may have “made atonement for the sin of Eve, the one taken from man’s side, who led Adam into temptation.”<sup>[5]</sup>

## PART OF THAT SEEMS TO HAVE ALSO BEEN BEARING THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF IT SINCE VIRTUALLY EVERY ELEMENT INVOLVED...CAN BE CONNECTED TO THE CURSE.

Amazingly, this Isaiah prophecy was recorded more than 700 years before Jesus was born and has caused some to wonder why He was destined to be executed in this manner? Was it merely because this was the method of execution in Jesus’ day? Rabbi Jason Sobel believes that “something as important as the death of God’s Son would not be based solely on Rome’s proclivity for a brutal means of execution.”<sup>[2]</sup>

So, what then? To answer this question, we need to understand that through His perfect sacrifice, Jesus was reversing the effects of the curse by taking our sin and the punishment for that sin upon Himself (passages such as Galatians 3:13 and 1 Peter 2:24 make this very clear). And part of that seems to have also been bearing the physical aspects of it since virtually every element involved in Christ’s crucifixion can be connected to the curse. For example, why did Jesus have to die on a cross (which is also called a tree in Scripture<sup>[3]</sup>)? Could it be that

Also highly significant is the crown of thorns. By wearing thorns, Jesus was literally bearing the physical sign of the curse. But this isn’t the first time He appeared with thorns. When the Lord first revealed

Himself to Moses in the desert of Midian He came in a burning bush—or more specifically in Hebrew, a burning thorn bush. Clearly, God identifies with our pain and has a plan of deliverance. At that time God sent Moses with staff in hand as that deliverer to perform miraculous signs. But God also promised that there would arise another deliverer even greater than Moses (**DEUTERONOMY 8:15; ACTS 3:22, 7:37**). The rod which the Roman soldiers mockingly placed in Jesus’ hand during His scourging may then be a physical sign that identifies Him as that greater deliverer—the Saviour of the world. ■

### SPOTLIGHT FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Though some Bible translations render “pierced” as “bruised” the Hebrew word does carry both meanings. Yet even without Isaiah 53:5, both Psalm 22:16 and Zechariah 12:10 refer to the Messiah being pierced.
- <sup>2</sup> Jason Sobel, *Mysteries of the Messiah: Unveiling Divine Connections from Genesis to Today*.
- <sup>3</sup> See for example Acts 5:30, 10:39, 15:29; Galatians 3:13 and 1 Peter 2:24.
- <sup>4</sup> Jason Sobel, *Mysteries of the Messiah: Unveiling Divine Connections from Genesis to Today*.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid*.

# The Arad Ostraca

by Corie Bobechko

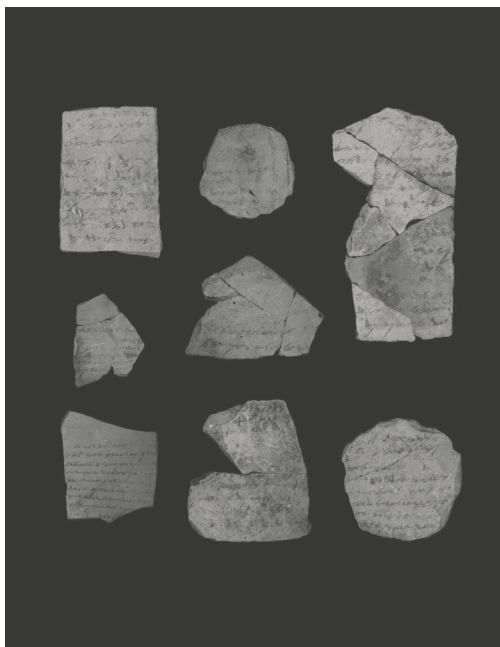


Arad was a Judean fortified outpost in the desert area of the Negev. It guarded Judah's south and acted as a refueling station for travelers and troops. Arad is mentioned early in the Bible in relation to the Israelite invasion of the Promised Land (**NUMBERS 21:1, 33:40**), and it is listed as defeated by Joshua during the conquest (**JOSHUA 12:14**). The time period of the Judges saw the city of Arad rebuilt and it is believed that credit should be given to King Solomon for its impressive fortifications. Arad was occupied until its destruction, like many other fortified cities of Judah, right before the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon in the 6th century BC (586 BC).

Today, Arad is famous for its preserved documents called ostraca, letters written in ink on clay potsherds (pictured, bottom left). One series of documents come from what archaeologists have labeled 'the office of the commander of the fortress'. His name was Eliashib, and he lived during the time of kings Jehioakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah of Judah, the last three kings before the destruction of Jerusalem. This also means that Eliashib was a contemporary of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

Some of Eliashib's personal seals were found at Arad along with many ostraca that shed light on everyday occurrences at the fortress. Many of them are signed ration orders for troops, showing that Arad was a regular pit stop for troops and possible Mediterranean mercenaries.

Another is a puzzling note letting Eliashib know that some mission involving the Jerusalem Temple was completed. Still another shows off the Bible's accuracy in condemning the nation of Edom. Edom used the Babylonian invasion to conquer territory in Judah. One of these ostraca urgently commands Eliashib to send troops for protection against Edom. "To Eliashib ... king ... troop ... from Arad 50 and from Kin[ah] ... and you shall send them to Ramat-Negeb. ..." The message is stringent—not to say hard-boiled: "The word of the king is incumbent on you for your very life! Behold I have sent to warn you today." Ramat-Negeb had to be defended "lest Edom should come there."





2025 BIBLE DISCOVERY GUIDE

# July

ISAIAH — EZEKIEL





# The LORD Loves

## ISAIAH 39–41

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

God's love is amazing. We seem to be programmed, as people made in His image, to have innate love for those closest to us: Our mother and father, our spouse, our children. Yet even these strong bonds of love fall short of God's love. While the sinful world may try to destroy and change the definition and expressions of God's love in our day to day lives, we need only to look to God and His Word for the truth of the matter. Throughout the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, we see written and acted out definitions of godly love. Take the famous love passage in 1 Corinthians 13, where we are told that faith, hope, and love remain after all else ends, and that the greatest of those three is love. In Isaiah 40, we are told that God will comfort His people. In this outpouring of His love, He is again pictured like a good and gentle shepherd who will gather the lambs in His arms and carry them.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ISAIAH 40:1–11

#### – 1 –

**Jerusalem is the most mentioned city in the Bible.**

God will return to Jerusalem to rule and reign, the Golden Kingdom is coming soon.

(v. 1–5)

#### – 2 –

**The Word of God is eternal.** When we read the Bible, we are reading words that will remain forever.

(v. 6–8)

#### – 3 –

**God will carry His people to comfort and eternity.**

The LORD is personally involved with rescuing His people.

(v. 9–11)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

God is not a distant creator; He is personal and ever-present. When we become His children, He will be personally involved in our lives as we allow Him to lead, move in and through us.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, THANK YOU FOR  
SAVING ME. I NEED YOUR  
PROTECTION AND LOVE.**



# You Are Mine

## ISAIAH 42-45

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

It is really interesting to take a step back from the inflated language of the media and social media and try to look clearly at the modern nation of Israel and her history. There is so much history! One thing is certain though, we must be careful to take our cues from Scripture. Let's remember the Biblical words of Paul the apostle, "I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew" (ROMANS 11:1-2). Back in the time of the earliest church, people were wondering whether physical Israel, the descendants of Abraham, still had a place in God's story. Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, taught yes. God has a story that He is crafting, despite the sin of the past and error of the present. And that story includes modern day Israel. Let's let Him tell it! Let's not hinder God's story by insisting that it go our way. Let's watch and pray, not getting distracted by all the noise.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ISAIAH 43:1-7

#### — 1 —

#### God calls Israel by name.

Our LORD is calling  
Israel today and says,  
"You are mine!"

(v. 1)

#### — 2 —

#### God has and will protect Israel from evil.

God's Word keeps  
us secure.

(v. 2-4)

#### — 3 —

#### God gathers His people for the revelation of who He really is. We must be

ready when the LORD  
reveals Himself to the  
rest of the world.

(v. 5-7)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

All of us are threatened by evil. There is real destruction, real weapons of war that threaten to destroy us. But by God's hand, we are saved. Let's trust the LORD, come what may!

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAY FOR YOUR  
PEOPLE, ISRAEL. HELP  
THEM TO TRUST IN WHO  
YOU ARE AND WHO YOU  
HAVE CALLED THEM TO BE.**

# Modern Gods

## ISAIAH 46–48

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Today in our reading, we hear about the false gods of Babylon. Based on worldly success alone, the Babylonian gods would have seemed very powerful. Isaiah doesn't buy it though. He prophesies that the so-called gods will ultimately be conquered and go into captivity just like the many nations Babylon had led into captivity in their names. The point is clear: God has no equal. We can dress up our idols to look as beautiful and powerful as we want, but reality does not change with fancy outfits, with lots of money, or lavish lifestyles. A dressed up, outrageously expensive and honoured idol is still just a statue made from wood and metal. Our idols may look different today, perhaps we still dress them up with false piety, or designer clothes, or whatever we need to justify their importance. But whatever our modern gods might be, in reality there is only one true God. He is not cruel, or unjust, but brings righteousness, truth, love, and change to our lives.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ISAIAH 46:1–11

#### – 1 –

**It is God who made us and heals us, not things made of human hands.** Our money is often worshipped as that which can save us, but it is only God who can save us from our flaws.

(v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

**It is God who saves us from our mental anguish and trouble, not money.** It is more desirable to be mentally well than to be rich.

(v. 5–7)

#### – 3 –

**Only God can speak to us about our future.** Wealth and money cannot answer all the hard questions that are inevitable in life.

(v. 8–11)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There are many in the world committed to discover their own peace through financial success. But who is dedicated to discovering the truth? Those who choose to follow Jesus Christ as LORD will find the truth – and His truth will set you free!

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I NEED YOU. HELP ME TO FOCUS ON YOUR WILL, NOT MINE.**

# The Work of Jesus Christ

## ISAIAH 49–52

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The longer I live, the more I am finding out that Jesus Christ is the answer to all our problems. All other answers fail. Sin is a deep, dark hole that none of us can escape from. It affects us and infects us. Isaiah 50 tells of the ways that Jesus Christ has worked to free us from the ravages of sin, and to free us from the judgment that sinning heaps upon us. Only in Jesus can we find true forgiveness, rest, and hope. Listen to this beautiful verse from our reading: “The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him* who is weary” (ISAIAH 50:4A, NKJV), or as the ESV words it, “...that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary.” Forgiveness, rest, and hope are found in Jesus.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ISAIAH 50:1–11

#### – 1 –

**God is all powerful. When Israel was in exile, they did not respond properly.**

We must always know and hear God.

(v. 1–3)

#### – 2 –

**Even when they mocked Him, Jesus Christ faced His accusers as the LORD.**

Those who rely on and trust in God are made safe in eternity with the LORD.

(v. 4–6)

#### – 3 –

**Only God through His power can keep us safe and well.** The strength of Jesus Christ is always around us, wherever we are and whatever we face.

(v. 7–11)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The LORD Jesus Christ has given us life eternal. When we choose to follow Him daily, God sends His Holy Spirit to teach us and give us the endurance to overcome anything that moves against His Word and work.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, THANK YOU FOR YOUR STRENGTH THAT SUSTAINS ME TODAY AND EVERY DAY.**

# The Call to Israel

## ISAIAH 53-56

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

In today's reading there is a beautiful call to return to the LORD. The 8th century BC prophet named Isaiah penned these passionate words under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It strikes me that even today, there is a call to Israel. It is real and it is observable. Will they see it? Will they believe it? I pray so. I pray that everyone, both Jew and Gentile will answer God's call to repentance and acceptance into the family of God. We have such an amazing God and Saviour, compassionate and merciful. Our passage today makes me think of a similar claim to God's love recorded in the New Testament. Romans 8:38-39 says, "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor power, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

### DISCOVERING GOD — ISAIAH 55:1-13

#### — 1 —

**Israel has a call of God upon them.** We must respond to God's call on each one of us.

(v. 1-5)

#### — 2 —

**God has promised to pardon Israel of all her sins through Jesus Christ.** We should all seek repentance through the LORD Jesus Christ.

(v. 6-7)

#### — 3 —

**Israel does not know the way God is truly worshipped.** Only through Jesus Christ can we learn and understand the mysteries of worship.

(v. 8-13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Worshipping God is so much more than music. When the LORD Jesus Christ is first in our lives, we learn of the power of true worship. God heals and helps us as He encourages and enables us.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAY YOU WOULD  
TEACH ME YOUR WAYS  
OF WORSHIP.**

# God Protects Israel

## PSALMS 83–86

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

In Psalm 83, we see nations banding together for the destruction of Israel. Though this was written thousands of years ago, it strikes me how similar this situation seems. Even today there are people and nations creating a united front of hate against modern Israel: interesting. As Christians, we know that our Scriptures were written by the descendants of Abraham who were carried along by the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ was a Jewish man, and a fulfillment of a promise to the world. Through the Jews, God has offered redemption to the whole world. Though much of the Jewish world has rejected Jesus, we are not so arrogant as to count ourselves better or unable to sin in the same way. God has recorded His history with the Jewish nation for us to learn from, and according to Romans, God still has a future plan for the physical children of Abraham. These times we live in, I believe, are the end times. As the LORD unfolds the events that are to take place, let's be careful who we listen to. Let's allow the Word of God to determine our attitudes and the wisdom of God to guard our hearts. Let's pray for salvation!

### DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 83:1–12

#### – 1 –

**Destroying Israel has a spiritual connection to it.**

God will preserve Israel, and counter the dark spiritual forces.

(v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

**The nations came together against Israel.** Today we see the same alignment of nations against Israel, but they will weaken and fail.

(v. 5–8)

#### – 3 –

**God will confront everyone who opposes Israel.** The LORD Jesus Christ is the One who came and gave His life for Israel. We are His witnesses.

(v. 9–12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The Bible contains a significant amount of prophecy. In fact, some would argue that the entire Bible is prophetic. To use Peter's words, "until the times of restoration of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets since the world began" (ACTS 3:21). In this very important time in history, let's pray for God's plans not to be slowed or frustrated by us.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAY FOR YOUR  
NATION ISRAEL. HELP US  
ALL TO FIND AND KNOW  
YOUR SAVING GRACE!**

# Justice is Far

ISAIAH 57–60

## DISCOVERING THE WORD

We all have an internal longing for fairness and justice, it is a built-in feature from our Heavenly Father. The distressing thing is that actual justice seems to be out of our reach, and too often life is far from fair. How do we handle this, as Christians? We take our cues from the Scriptures. They tell us the “why”. Justice and fairness are far from us because we are sinful, and we live in a now-sinful world. Our hope for justice moves from the here and now to the final destination. God will bring perfect justice as the perfect Judge. He alone has the power to correct evil and condemn sin in a satisfactory way. In Isaiah 59, we read about how far Israel was from any form of justice. They couldn’t even achieve human justice because of their sin. We are still like Israel; our only hope comes in the form of Jesus Christ. He begins the restoration of true justice and righteousness in our lives. By following God’s morality, we will achieve justice as best as can be found on earth, as we await our final and perfect Judge.

## DISCOVERING GOD — ISAIAH 59:1–11

– 1 –

**Only God is able to overcome our sins.**

Jesus Christ came, died on the cross and rose again to pay the cost of our sins.

(v. 1–5)

– 2 –

**No acts of religion can do anything against sin.**

Only through the gift of God’s Son Jesus Christ, is there any forgiveness and hope.

(v. 6–8)

– 3 –

**Salvation is no longer far from each of us, it is through Jesus Christ.**

We must repent of our sins and follow Him as LORD.

(v. 9–11)

## DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

It is important for each one of us to stay close to the LORD Jesus Christ. When we trust and rely on Him, He will lift us up and provide us with all we need – now and for eternity.

## TODAY’S PRAYER

**LORD, I ASK FOR YOUR FORGIVENESS AND YOUR HELP—FORGIVE ME FOR MY SINS AND BE THE LORD OF MY LIFE.**

# The Watchmen

## ISAIAH 61–63

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The Hebrew term for watchmen is **šāmar**. It literally means to keep, to guard, to observe and give heed, and it is used many times in the book of Ezekiel. To be a watchman was a very important position as they were the ones who kept an eye out to alert the people of the city about news or danger. God's people are often compared to watchmen posted on city walls to keep an eye out for an attack or to be the first ones to witness the return of the LORD to His Holy city. In Isaiah 62, the LORD begins to use this word as the time approaches for the coming of His Son, Jesus Christ. The LORD seems to say, "Watchman, see what is coming!" As watchmen, we are responsible to make others aware of the meaning and message of Jesus Christ in our lives. This is why Jesus Christ told His disciples: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (MARK 16:15).

### DISCOVERING GOD – ISAIAH 62:1–9

#### – 1 –

**Jerusalem is God's city, the place from which Jesus Christ will rule.** As a bride can only have one husband, so Israel can have only one God. The Church is the bride of the LORD Jesus Christ.

(v. 1–5)

#### – 2 –

**Jerusalem is going in one direction today.** As watchmen, we are people who call on God for Jerusalem and Israel.

(v. 6–7)

#### – 3 –

**Jerusalem is changing and growing.** We are to be ready for God's great gift to planet Earth, in a short time: The return of Christ.

(v. 8–9)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

I believe we are living in a very unique time in our history, a time which is spoken about much in the prophetic books of the Bible. However, we need to be careful to hear the LORD, rather than listening only to those who are pitching their own understanding to us.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO HEAR  
YOU AND TO SEE YOU  
WORKING IN OUR WORLD.**



# The Choice of God

## ISAIAH 64-66

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

There are consequences for the decisions we make. Most of us acknowledge this truth, even though we tend to not want the outcome of those choices. We will often not think about the consequences of our actions so that we can justify doing them in the first place! Our reading today has me thinking about how God makes a choice about us just as we make a choice about Him. He has chosen to make Himself available to us. He has chosen to give people a free will, and that means that some people will choose to follow God while others will not. Every decision has an outcome. In Isaiah 65, we see how God made Himself open and accessible to the people. He sought them out, even though it should have been them seeking Him out. Still today, God seeks us out. He has made a way for us to come to Him through the work of Christ, and yet still we choose against Him. When it comes to God, we must choose wisely.

### DISCOVERING GOD — ISAIAH 65:1-12

#### — 1 —

**The LORD describes the cultures of this fallen world.** Christians follow Jesus Christ. We are different in our thinking and believing than those who do not.

(v. 1-5)

#### — 2 —

**God's judgment against sin is perfect, because He is perfect.** We can do nothing without Jesus Christ leading us. This is eternally good.

(v. 6-7)

#### — 3 —

**God will make His judgment on sin, not on the culture of people.** There is only one way we can deal with our sin: Come to Christ and repent.

(v. 8-12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We have to remember that God is holy. God's holiness cannot exist with unholiness, and the Scriptures tell us that He is going to deal with that. The LORD will make this planet abide in the presence of God for 1,000 years. Then the New Heavens and New Earth will come.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, THANK YOU FOR YOUR DEATH AND RESURRECTION, AND THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE WITH YOU.**

# Jeremiah

## JEREMIAH 1-4

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The name Jeremiah is pronounced in Hebrew as YIR-MEY-AHU. It is a word that means God founds, exalts, loosens or throws. Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet because much of his writing is music in the form of lamenting. Jeremiah was only a boy about thirteen years of age when he was called into the ministry of prophecy. The year was about 627 BC, and the king ruling in Judah was King Josiah. Remember that the nation of Israel had split in two, forming two different nations around 930 BC. The ten northern tribes became Israel, and the tribes to the south (Judah and Benjamin, along with Simeon) became known as Judah, which is where Jeremiah lived and ministered. It's interesting to note that Jeremiah was born into a family of priests living in Anathoth, a small town northeast of Jerusalem. These priests could have been descendants of the priest banished by Solomon to Anathoth years before.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 3:1-10

#### — 1 —

**The unfaithfulness of relational sin pollutes the land.** God calls us back to Him through Jesus Christ, who makes us faithful people.

(v. 1-2)

#### — 2 —

**How we use our free will determines the success of our land.** When we choose to live according to Jesus Christ, we are wiser and happier people.

(v. 3-5)

#### — 3 —

**God tells Jeremiah there is not a real return of heart in the land of Judah.** It is one thing to love good things, it is another to love God.

(v. 6-10)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

When our attention and focus is on loving good results or good things, we lose the idea of loving the LORD our God with all our heart. Let's love the LORD because He is God! He is good! And He will bless us how we need to be blessed.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I DESIRE TO  
LOVE YOU WITH ALL MY  
HEART, SOUL, MIND, AND  
STRENGTH. HELP ME TO  
STAY CLOSE TO YOU.**

# Jerusalem Falls

## JEREMIAH 5-9

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Jeremiah began his ministry in the time of King Josiah—a king who conducted one of the greatest revivals of God’s law in history. But it did not last long. The people did not faithfully grab and hold onto the reality of God’s provision. The Law was still simply a set of laws, not God’s perfect word. Jerusalem was flagrantly disobedient, and the Judge of heaven and earth had to do something about it. Jeremiah 1-6 seems to take place during the reign King Josiah around 625 BC, before the fall of Jerusalem. The people presumed, arrogantly, that God would not let the city fall because it was the capital city that He established for His people Israel. But as the time of judgment came closer and closer, it seems as though God wanted the people of Jerusalem to feel the weight of their sins get heavier and heavier; that the reality of sin would take root in their hearts, so that they would turn and repent of their ways. Israel’s ignorance and disobedience was coming to a dramatic end, and Jeremiah wept.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 6:1-12

#### — 1 —

**The people to the north of Jerusalem are warned to leave.** God will accomplish His will. The best thing we can do is to follow Him.

(v. 1-5)

#### — 2 —

**God told the people of Jerusalem what would happen to them.** God reveals the truth in His Word. We should follow Him.

(v. 6-8)

#### — 3 —

**God says the people did not hear Him because they were not listening.** We need to know God’s Word, hear His voice and get with His plan.

(v. 9-12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

It is vitally important that as Christians, we adjust our minds to follow the LORD. It is not natural for us to follow the ways of God because of our sin. But when we read the Bible and pray daily, we prepare ourselves to hear and know what God is doing.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO READ  
YOUR WORD DAILY AND  
LISTEN FOR YOU IN MIND  
AND SPIRIT.**

# The LORD's Response

## JEREMIAH 10–12

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

We know that the LORD is the same yesterday, today, and forever. God never changes. Yet He did something totally new and unique in human history: He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to live a perfect sinless life and minister to us for thirty-three years, all because He loves us. Ultimately, we chose to crucify Him on the cross—as sinners do. Through Christ's death and resurrection, however, we now have the opportunity to avoid God's wrath and be reconciled to God, free from the bondage of sin and death. The forgiveness of our sin comes through Christ alone.

Like Asaph ([PSALM 73](#)) and David ([PSALM 37](#)), Jeremiah brings his complaint to the LORD: *Why does the way of the wicked prosper?* The people had rebelled and turned away from God's warnings. Jeremiah's question brings a response from the LORD. God's divine judgment will come. Yet if Judah and their evil neighbours repent and turn to the LORD, He will build them up. Only God, who never changes, can change our hearts for good.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 12:1–13

#### – 1 –

**Jeremiah prayed that God would pull out the evil people from the kingdom.**

We must also pray that the LORD would help us continue to do His work.

(v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

**God says there are some who talk well, but their hearts are not right.** Our hearts must be dedicated wholeheartedly to the LORD.

(v. 5–6)

#### – 3 –

**Jeremiah understands he lives in the culture of sin which is about to be judged.** We also live in the culture of sin, but the LORD is with us and we are not alone. (v. 7–13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The second coming of the LORD Jesus brings true and total relief from the injustice in this world. While we work hard to keep our laws and ways right with the LORD, here and now, we know that God will come and make things right.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, MAY YOUR KINGDOM COME, AND YOUR WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.**

# God is Faithful

## PSALMS 87–89

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The LORD is faithful. We are not. We are people born under the curse of sin. It is only through the holiness of Almighty God that we can have any strength or success. When we learn and understand that, things begin to change in our lives. We recognize that God is an eternal God and has given us salvation and the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our LORD and Saviour. He has saved us from sin and death. Psalm 89 expresses this reality in a contemplation of Ethan the Ezrahite. The first 10 verses seem to sum up the meaning of praise to God because He has redeemed all that is wrong and has made away for us to become right. The best way to understand that is to look at verse 10, “You have broken Rahab in pieces, as one who is slain; You have scattered Your enemies with Your mighty arm” (PSALM 89:10). The name or title Rahab is used in reference to a demonic dragon swimming in the seas of chaos (Isaiah 51:9), and, unsurprisingly, symbolized rebellious ancient Egypt.

### DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 89:1–10

#### – 1 –

**God is merciful and faithful.** God did not create us to be the object of His frustration with sin, but to be saved from it through Jesus Christ.  
(v. 1–2)

#### – 2 –

**God has promised that Jesus Christ would be His throne over all people.** God always fulfills His promises because He is faithful.  
(v. 3–4)

#### – 3 –

**God has already destroyed evil and evil’s establishment; He is already the victor.** As Christians, we are people who choose to follow Christ.  
(v. 5–10)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The Psalms is a collection of music that teaches our soul to sing. We sing about God and His mercy, His faithfulness and victory. This is something we need to keep close to our hearts, daily. Let’s always remember that we are followers of Christ, not losers or leftovers.

### TODAY’S PRAYER

**LORD, I TRUST IN YOUR  
WORK IN MY LIFE TODAY.**

# Being Destroyed

## JEREMIAH 13-15

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

What does it mean when we say we are ‘being destroyed’? Is our economy wrecked? Is our community at odds with one another? Is our house struggling to make ends meet? Is the population declining? What does it really mean to ‘be destroyed’? The answer to that question comes in Jeremiah 13, in which God tells the people of Judah through Jeremiah, during the reign of King Jehoiachin, that they are being destroyed spiritually, economically, and socially (and soon to be physically). This chapter skips forward to about 597 BC, and speaks directly to the people of Judah. The LORD tells Jeremiah to purchase a new linen sash and wear it around his waist, but not to put it in water. Then He tells Jeremiah to go to the Euphrates River and hide the linen undergarment in a hole in a rock. After many days, the LORD sends Jeremiah back to retrieve the hidden sash. It is ruined. The LORD used the linen undergarment as a symbol of how God would ruin the pride of Judah and Jerusalem because of their unrepentant sinfulness.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 13:1-14

#### — 1 —

**God used a practical example for what He was going to do.** God often takes practical examples and uses them to speak to us.  
(v. 1-7)

#### — 2 —

**God used the linen undergarment as an example of how sin had destroyed the people.** Sin has not changed, its destructive nature is still evident today.  
(v. 8-11)

#### — 3 —

**God destroyed Judah and Jerusalem.** We are obligated to follow Jesus Christ with our life.  
(v. 12-14)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

When we give our lives to the follow the LORD, we take His Word and His commands into our hearts and put it in action in our personal convictions. As we learn and grow in the LORD, we spend the rest of our lives seeking and serving Him.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I WANT TO KNOW  
HOW TO TRUST YOU. HELP  
ME TO SPEND MY LIFE  
SERVING YOU.**

# God's Peace

## JEREMIAH 16-18

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

One of the things God did in the time of Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, living around 606 BC, was to remove His blessing of peace from Judah. This set the pace for a cultural decline into turmoil. This is something we must learn: the peace of God does not come because we are good people. God favours those who choose to learn His paths and follow His ways. This is key! When a culture reads, learns, and follows the Word of God, the LORD honours those people. Judah had forgotten and had not honoured the LORD and His law. Today, on this side of the cross, we rest in the blessings of God's grace through Jesus Christ. But even Christ has laws we must pay attention to—our lives change and grow, after all, as we read and honour the Word of God. In our present culture, we need to remember that God is ever-present, so reading and understanding His Word and Law is about resting in Him.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 16:1-9

#### — 1 —

**God does not honour those who do not choose to follow His way.** The LORD reminds us to know His ways by reading and digesting His Word.

(v. 1-4)

#### — 2 —

**When God takes His peace away, we can no longer serve Him.** We serve God through Jesus Christ.

(v. 5)

#### — 3 —

**Happiness and gladness are not in a culture that ignores God.** We have the opportunity through Jesus Christ to gain true happiness by serving the LORD.

(v. 6-9)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

When I came to know the LORD in 1974, I started to take my Bible to school and my friends made fun of me for it. Nevertheless, I determined in my heart to continue taking my Bible with me and reading it in study hall every day. From this, I learned how to love the LORD Jesus Christ.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME READ YOUR WORD DAILY AND PUT IT INTO ACTION IN MY LIFE.**



# Breaking the Jar

## JEREMIAH 19–22

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

In 606 BC, King Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, was ruling. Jehoahaz was not like his father, who had been the last great revivalist the kingdom of Judah would see. Josiah had sought the LORD while king in his teens, then in his 20's the priests presented him with the book of the Law of God, it was a copy of the Torah, the Scriptures. As they read it to him, Josiah humbled himself and prayed. God promised Josiah that the coming devastating judgment on the nation would be delayed until he was gone. So now, at the death of Josiah, Jehoahaz took power and rejected the religious reforms of his father. Judgment was coming once again for the city of Jerusalem and the nation of Judah. As a symbolic warning, God commanded Jeremiah to buy a clay jar and take it and the elders of Jerusalem to the Valley of Hinnom. As he shattered the jar in front of the elders, Jeremiah declared that God would shatter the people.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 19:1–13

#### – 1 –

**God speaks to the elders of the people and of the priests.** The message of the LORD is for everyone.

(v. 1–3)

#### – 2 –

**God knows the violation of sin by the people of Judah and Jerusalem.** Our LORD sees everything; there is nothing we can hide from Him.

(v. 4–9)

#### – 3 –

**God gives a symbolic act of warning to the people as a result of their sins.** We will be responsible to the Lord Jesus Christ for unconfessed sin.

(v. 10–13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The best way to serve God is through a repentant attitude in our lives. We do not know everything or understand all sins, but when we repent of our sins, we grow in the Lord Jesus Christ. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 JOHN 1:9).

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I ASK FOR YOUR FORGIVENESS TODAY.**  
**THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS IN MY LIFE.**

# Seventy Years

## JEREMIAH 23-25

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

In 603 BC, Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah was ruling in his 4th year and Jeremiah the prophet was bringing a message of warning from God. Jeremiah identifies the timing like this, "From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, this is the twenty-third year..." (JEREMIAH 25:3). In other words, "I've been speaking to you about these things for twenty-three years!" Jeremiah goes on to warn the people of Judah that disaster was coming because they had ignored the Godly prophets of the past, including Jeremiah himself, by not repenting of their sins. Jeremiah's ministry would see Jerusalem exposed and humiliated; the time of warnings was coming to an end. God would give the land seventy years of rest since the people had refused to follow God's Law, which would have seen the land be given regular rests or sabbaths. It's interesting to me that God repeatedly identifies the other gods the people have worshipped and served. God never goes back on His Word. He will judge every sin; He will make all injustices right. It is a matter of timing.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 25:1-11

#### — 1 —

#### God says that sin begins in our hearts first.

The attitude of sinning or rebellion against God always starts in the way we think.

(v. 1-6)

#### — 2 —

**God says that He has spoken, but the people have not listened.** We need to keep our hearts and minds tuned to hear the LORD, always.

(v. 7-8)

#### — 3 —

#### God speaks to the specific duration of His punishment.

God is never surprised, He is keenly aware of the places, people, and times in which

He will act.

(v. 9-11)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We often do not understand God, because we do not think like He does. We are human and under sin. We need to keep an attitude of humility, remembering this as we seek the mind of Christ. This is key to following the LORD.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, PLEASE GUARD MY HEART WITH YOUR PEACE AND HELP ME TO HEAR YOU AS I LIVE EACH DAY TO FOLLOW YOU.**

# False Prophets

## JEREMIAH 26-28

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

It is approximately 593 BC when Jeremiah records his work in Jeremiah 28. It is at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah and there are many false prophets who are speaking to the king and people. Interestingly, this is not unlike our present day: There are many words being given in the name of God. How do you know who is telling the truth and who is not? If all we do is listen to prophets, then we can run into a lot of confusion. The best way to gain clarity to all of this is to read and understand what God has already said in His Word. God does not contradict Himself and does not aim to confuse us. In today's reading, we will see how deceptive some prophets can be. They may prophesy what feels good to us, they may prophesy for profit, they may prophesy to gain a following, all of these are wrong motivations. The truth is often not so convenient for prophets – it often does not make them popular. The reason is simple: sin. God must confront our sin and our world is covered in it. Bringing God's truth to the world often means conflict.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 28:1-11

#### — 1 —

**Hananiah prophesied falsely about Jerusalem's revenge on Babylon.**

There are people who listen to prophets, instead of God's Word.

(v. 1-4)

#### — 2 —

**Real prophets are proven when their words come to pass.** We are commanded to listen to the Bible in prophecy.

(v. 5-9)

#### — 3 —

**Jeremiah walked away from the confrontation.**

Rather than fight, the best thing we can do is walk away and go to God's Word.

(v. 10-11)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The best way to handle someone who insists they are a prophet speaking for God, is to listen, considering their words and the fruit of their lives. God never goes against His Word, and He will help us discern the truth.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I WANT TO KNOW  
YOUR WORD DEEP IN MY  
HEART, PLEASE HELP ME  
TO READ IT EVERY DAY.**

# Mourning to Joy

## JEREMIAH 29–31

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

I love Jeremiah 31 because I believe I have seen an example of its fulfillment in my lifetime! To set the stage, in approximately 596 BC, Jeremiah was overwhelmed with a message from God. It was about the future of Israel, far beyond Jeremiah's own life; a time when all the people of Israel will come from all the places where they were scattered, and they will return to the land of Israel. In my life, in 1991, I travelled to Israel for the first time. At the airport in Tel Aviv, I watched a Russian jet unload about fifty passengers who were Russian Jews. They were born in Russia, but were coming home to live in Israel. The facilitator of their group was a man named Daniel. He invited us back to his apartment for dinner where we got to meet and speak with some of these new Israelis. I had never before seen such joy! So, it strikes me still today that Jeremiah 31 has a unique meaning for those who have been and still are returning home.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 31:1–14

#### – 1 –

**The thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ will come when He returns.** The people of Israel will come from all over the world to worship and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

(v. 1–6)

#### – 2 –

**Although Jesus Christ will rule the world, He is the Father of Israel.** Christians will serve Christ, in His reign in the future.

(v. 7–9)

#### – 3 –

**Jesus Christ rescues Israel, and saves her from complete destruction.** The goodness of God has redeemed and delivered us through the Lord Jesus Christ.

(v. 10–14)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Rescue from our sin happens only one way: by our repentance and the forgiveness of our sins through Jesus Christ. When we do that, we begin a journey that changes the rest of our life and our eternity. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (JOHN 14:6).

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, THANK YOU FOR  
SAVING ME AND TURNING  
MY MOURNING INTO JOY.  
YOU ARE MY STRENGTH  
AND MY SONG!**

# The Righteous Win

## PSALMS 90–93

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

When I was about thirteen years old, I remember hearing an evangelist at The Cathedral of Tomorrow exclaim, “WE WIN!” He was referring to the book of Revelation and reading that all believers in Jesus Christ win! Psalm 92 is a beautiful praise to the LORD and a reminder to all its readers that the righteous do, indeed, win! God’s love and faithfulness through Jesus has gained us the victory. Today we can ask Him for the forgiveness of our sins and join His Kingdom—He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 JOHN 1:9). As God has told us, “...we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (EPHESIANS 6:12). When we come to the Lord Jesus, He begins the process of training as we work hard to become better and better as the people of God.

### DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 92:1–15

#### – 1 –

**We should praise the LORD, every morning and every night!**

Remember that praise to Jesus Christ is a form of protection against evil.

(v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

**All the workers of iniquity will be scattered.** Christians know that God has already won the victory!

(v. 5–9)

#### – 3 –

**Knowing God is our strength.** Having Jesus Christ in our lives is the only weapon we have to conquer sin; He is all we need.

(v. 10–15)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The book of Psalms is a great book of hymns and prayers. Let’s make it a practice to read, meditate, sing, and keep it close to our hearts, applying the Word of God whenever and wherever we can.

“Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You” (PSALM 119:11).

### TODAY’S PRAYER

**LORD, I PRAISE YOU**  
**FOR FORGIVING ME OF**  
**ALL MY SINS!**

# The Commands of God

## JEREMIAH 32–35

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

When we talk about the *commands* of God, what does that mean? The word command means to direct or give an authoritative order, rule, task or prerogative. In other words, it is not a suggestion but a directive—it is not a may but a must. Therefore, when God issues a command, it is most certainly not optional. In about 587 BC, through Jeremiah, God gave the command to King Zedekiah that liberty was to be given to all Hebrew slaves—both men and women—they were to be set free; those who had fallen behind in the economy and had sold themselves to the wealthy. According to Sabbatical law, every seven years those who served as slaves were to be set free. King Zedekiah made a covenant with the people in Jerusalem to proclaim liberty to any in bondage and the people obeyed and let them go. But afterward they changed their minds and made the slaves return. When we obey the commands of Christ, we must fully walk in His ways. God sees and knows all.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 34:1–16

#### – 1 –

#### God warns Zedekiah about what his future holds.

God knows everything: past, present, and future. We need to remember that, when we pray.

(v. 1–3)

#### – 2 –

#### God speaks to Zedekiah about his death. As

Christians, we know that God sees our life and death; He has made us eternal beings.

(v. 4–5)

#### – 3 –

#### Judah had made a covenant with God, and went back on it.

When we make a promise to God, we must keep it. Time will not cover our sins, only Jesus Christ does.

(v. 6–16)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

When we come to Christ in repentance of our sins, He is faithful to forgive us. Now we begin a new life, choosing to turn from our own desires to follow the LORD and His ways. When we begin to understand what God has done for us, we begin to understand our responsibility to His salvation.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I COMMIT MY**  
**LIFE TO LIVE FOR YOU,**  
**AND I RECOGNIZE MY**  
**RESPONSIBILITY TO YOU**  
**AND TO THOSE AROUND ME.**

# Falsely Accused

## JEREMIAH 36–38

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Christians serve Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man, and the firstborn of eternal life in human flesh. Right now, we serve the Lord Jesus in a world that is fully submerged in sin—the opposite of God—God is sinless, while we are sinful as human beings. Sin entered the heart of man when the first couple, Adam and Eve, took from the tree of knowledge of good and evil of which the LORD told them not to do ([GENESIS 2:16-17, 3:6](#)). Sin came through disobedience. To save us from ourselves and the works of Satan, Jesus came in the flesh to be pierced for our transgressions ([ISAIAH 53:5](#)), and rose from the dead in the flesh three days later so that we, too, will one Day conquer death through Him. It was taught in Jewish circles through the centuries that His Jewish disciples came and stole His body away, but that was impossible because of the Roman guard watching the tomb. Today, there are over two billion Christians on this planet, nearly one third of the global population. Still, many Christians are falsely accused for violence and things they have not done. Soon this will change, when Jesus Christ returns to reign and rule.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 37:1–15

#### – 1 –

**There was an overthrow planned against the Chaldeans.** No matter how we try to control our own lives, only God controls what happens to us.

(v. 1–5)

#### – 2 –

**God says that the Chaldeans will return with a vengeance.** The only one who knows the future is God. We would be wise to recognize Him in our life.

(v. 6–10)

#### – 3 –

**Jeremiah was falsely accused of defecting by a guard named Irijah.** When we commit ourselves to the truth of God, we become enemies of those who falsely

accuse. (v. 11–15)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The best way to resolve accusations against us is to remain honest. We should pray and ask the LORD to keep us open and honest with as many people around us who will listen. The LORD will protect us, if we are careful to be truthful.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME AND TEACH ME TO BE TRUTHFUL AND HONEST IN MY LIFE, IN EVERY WAY.**



# A Time of Peace

## JEREMIAH 39–41

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The date was about 586 BC. God had destroyed Jerusalem, so there was a time of peace that came for Jeremiah. He had suffered under his own people because he had prophesied many times that the king of Babylon would succeed. Now the king of Babylon had put a man named Gedaliah in place as governor for Jerusalem. Jeremiah was released and stayed in Judah with Gedaliah. Here he was treated differently than by his own people. The enemy, Babylon, treated him well. He was given the choice to live where he wanted to—a choice that no other Israelite had a right to make. In this time of about seven months with Gedaliah as governor, Jeremiah had peace. Then a man named Ishmael, one of the royal family came to Jerusalem and killed Gedaliah in an attempt to takeover. But Jeremiah loved the LORD and the Word of God. He was a prophet who handled what God had told him carefully. And sometimes that is not always easy to maintain.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 40:1–12

#### – 1 –

**Jeremiah was given a choice where to live after the Babylonians took over.**

Our choices must be driven by service to the LORD first, to be right.

(v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

**Jeremiah was given an allowance by the Babylonians to live.** Those who love the LORD and are concerned with His Word, will be taken care of by Him.

(v. 5–6)

#### – 3 –

**The government was settled and living their lives was important at that time.**

When we settle down and begin to trust in God, He gives us peace.

(v. 7–12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Working to trust in the LORD is one of the most important things we will develop in our life. Knowing what desires God has given us is critical and important. When we begin to seek and trust in the LORD, He begins to work in our lives and direct us in a new way, a higher way, unlike anything we have ever known.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I NEED TO KNOW  
YOUR WILL IN MY LIFE.  
HELP ME TO HEAR YOU.**

# Jeremiah Speaks in Egypt

## JEREMIAH 42–45

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The men who came back to Judah after the short-lived time of peace which Gedaliah had presided over, chose to kill Gedaliah and run off to Egypt. In the process, they denounced Jeremiah who had prophesied against this whole rebellion, and the men took him with them to Tahpanhes, Egypt. Here again, Jeremiah came to the forefront with another of God's messages to them. At God's direction, Jeremiah took large stones in his hand and hid them while the men of Judah watched. Then Jeremiah proclaimed that God would bring the king of the Babylonians to Egypt, and he will pursue them and rule over everyone and everything. It is fascinating to note that Jeremiah had prophesied that the Babylonians would be used as a tool of God's judgment. We never know what really happened to Jeremiah after this point. The Bible never tells us. Nevertheless, the impact of rebellion against God's judgment is compelling.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 43:1–13

#### – 1 –

**Dark conspiracies created doubt about what Jeremiah had said, even though he was right.** We must be careful, there are people who speak well but do not speak the truth of God.

(v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

**The leaders headed to Egypt for safety from the Babylonians.** No matter where we go, we are never beyond God's presence.

(v. 5–7)

#### – 3 –

**Through Jeremiah, God told the people He would come after them.** We can never run or hide from God.

(v. 8–13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

It is important to remember that we can never run or hide from the presence of God. In Psalm 139, David writes about God's perfect knowledge of man: "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there" (PSALM 139:7–8).

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I RECOGNIZE YOU  
ARE ALWAYS THERE, NO  
MATTER WHERE I AM.**

# Gaza

## JEREMIAH 46–48

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The land of Gaza is mentioned in the Bible many times. Historically, it belonged to the Philistines, a Canaanite culture who fought against the nation of Israel. While King David was able to diminish their presence and power in the region, much later Jeremiah would still prophesy against the Philistines. The first seven verses of Jeremiah 47 were written around 604 BC, during the reign of King Jehoahaz. “Baldness has come upon Gaza, Ashkelon is cut off with the remnant of their valley. How long will you cut yourself?” (JEREMIAH 47:5). A big issue with the Philistines was apparently how they handled it when Israel and Judah were under punishment from God. Rather than seeing it as a serious thing, they ridiculed God’s people and took advantage of their difficulties. Here’s the point: God judges our hearts and intentions. When we see people in judgment, let’s not rejoice over it (PROV. 24:17-18). Let’s allow God to remain the judge and remember that we too are sinful humans that will face His righteous judgment.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 47:1–7

#### – 1 –

#### **God tells the Philistines that they will be judged.**

We should seek the LORD, and not become involved with judging others.

(v. 1–4)

#### – 2 –

#### **There is nothing the Philistines can do to head off God’s punishment.**

Jesus Christ has rescued us from God’s judgment of our sin.

Thank You, LORD!

(v. 5)

#### – 3 –

#### **The sword of God, which is the Holy Spirit, goes to war against all sin.**

We have gained access to God because of Jesus Christ. Let’s read His Word and do as the

Spirit says. (v. 6–7)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The Bible is not a self-help book; it was written to bring justice to sin—and that does not always feel good. When we read the Word of God, we are preparing ourselves to live in a holy place. That holy place is not far off; it is in you right now. Make your hearts ready before the LORD—the Kingdom of God is within you (LUKE 17:20-21).

### TODAY’S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO CHANGE  
THROUGH YOUR HOLY SPIRIT.**

# As Jeremiah Prophesied

## JEREMIAH 49–52

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The weeping prophet was right. Everything he said would happen did come to pass exactly as he said it would. Zedekiah was never killed in battle; he lived in prison, blind, until his death. Around 587 BC, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, he and his men of war tried to escape the Chaldeans. However, they overtook Zedekiah and his army in the plains of Jericho and he was taken captive and brought to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar pronounced judgment on the Judean king and killed Zedekiah's sons in front of him along with Judean officials, before gouging out his eyes. The last thing King Zedekiah saw was the destruction of his own sons. The judgment of God is real and this is how the kingdom was brought to an end. The city was even burned and destroyed a short time later. Jerusalem's end was truly tragic. But remember that God was pronouncing judgment on the sin that originated there. God always judges sin. We must remember this, as we look to the future.

### DISCOVERING GOD — JEREMIAH 52:1–11

#### – 1 –

**Rebellion was a way of life for Zedekiah.** There are people who live to rebel. This is wrong and not of God.

(v. 1–3)

#### – 2 –

**Zedekiah tried to escape the city with his life, but he was caught.** Through the amazing grace of Jesus Christ, He has rescued us from God's judgment on our sin.

(v. 4–8)

#### – 3 –

**Zedekiah was blinded, put in bronze fetters and taken as prisoner to Babylon.** We deserve the punishment for sin, but Jesus Christ has set us free!

(v. 9–11)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We should thank God every day for His amazing and awesome Son Jesus Christ. Jesus has freed us from the bondage of sin, and daily gives us His grace to continue and grow in the LORD, in spite of our sinful nature.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**THANK YOU, LORD JESUS CHRIST, FOR HAVING MERCY ON ME AND GIVING ME YOUR AMAZING GRACE.**

# A Song of Praise

## PSALMS 94–98

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Music is the universal language of the spirit. Millions and millions of dollars are spent on and in the music industry. But before there was any monetary advancement, music was the centerpiece of poetic proclamations—whether the love between a man and woman or between family or the beauty around us—music expresses our emotions in a new way. Music is also the center of those who are Christians. Those who follow Christ often express their praise to God through music. He is the center of all their worship. The reason we have the ancient and profound book of Psalms is to sing and bring our praise and prayers to the LORD. Some of us may not think we sing well, or some may not have rhythm, whatever the case, music is a way to express our love and thankfulness to the LORD. Psalm 96 is a song of praise to God in His coming one thousand-year reign as King of the Earth.

### DISCOVERING GOD — PSALM 96:1–13

#### – 1 –

**We sing about the truth of God.** God has created everything, restores everything, and gives us eternity as we are saved and yield our wills to Him.

(v. 1–6)

#### – 2 –

**God is holy and we must worship Him for His holiness.** Jesus Christ makes us holy, as we give our lives to Him.

(v. 7–9)

#### – 3 –

**God gave us the testimony of Jesus Christ, and we must proclaim it.** We are called to proclaim the good news of Christ to everyone around us.

(v. 10–13)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

The most important thing about being a Christian is that Jesus Christ is alive in our soul. When we yield to His will, it becomes easy to tell others about what Jesus Christ has saved us from. He came into this world to save any and all who will come to Him.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I WANT TO TELL  
OTHERS ABOUT JESUS  
CHRIST. PLEASE SHOW ME  
OPPORTUNITIES THIS WEEK  
TO DO JUST THAT.**

# Funeral Song

## LAMENTATIONS 1-3

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

The city of Jerusalem was one of the proudest places in antiquity. There is no question that its stately status was a result of kings like David and his son Solomon. Now the city was a filthy mess, burned down by the rollicking Babylonians. It is to this change in status that Jeremiah breaks down and pens the book of Lamentations. Really, it is Jeremiah's heartfelt cry and a funeral song dedicated to the defeat and brutal fall of the city of Jerusalem. This defeat would not be permanent, though. This is, after all, the city where Jesus Christ will return and rule the earth for 1,000 years. Many call that future time the golden age of Israel. Lamentations is made up of five chapters and is a book about pain and suffering, but also about hope in God in the midst of that sorrow. The book begins with this phrase, "How lonely sits the city that was full of people!" (LAMENTATIONS 1:1). It ends with, "Turn us back to You, O LORD, and we will be restored" (LAMENTATIONS 5:21).

### DISCOVERING GOD – LAMENTATIONS 1:1-7

#### – 1 –

**The city of Jerusalem was destroyed.** Only the LORD has the ability to restore what He has destroyed.

(v. 1-2)

#### – 2 –

**Judah has also been destroyed.** Sin is a devastation that eliminates all hope for our future.

(v. 3-4)

#### – 3 –

**The people of Judah were the result of their own decisions.** As we choose, so we will be.

(v. 5-7)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There are people who identify as a Christian but do not live to follow Christ. They have made a decision of who they will be. Our decisions are made by what we do, not what we say. As Christians, we are called to follow Jesus Christ.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I WANT TO FOLLOW YOUR LEAD. HELP ME TO LISTEN AND DO WHAT YOU WOULD DO.**

# Sin

## LAMENTATIONS 4-5

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

When the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians, it was over. If we had been present during that time, this song of lament would be very potent. Jerusalem and Judah had failed to fulfill the covenant of the LORD, and as a result God brought destruction upon them. The book of Lamentations was written by Jeremiah to articulate the deep sorrow God's people had over the destruction their sin had caused. Sin is an evil and horrible reality that affects all of us because we are all born in bondage to it. However, Jesus Christ is the anointed One sent by God to overcome sin and defeat death. Without the presence of Jesus Christ, His death on the cross and His resurrection to life, we would not have any hope today. Yet because of what Christ did we can be restored and have fellowship once again with the holy Almighty God, if we will only take Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.

### DISCOVERING GOD – LAMENTATIONS 5:1-9

#### – 1 –

**The city of Jerusalem was lost because of sin.** There is nothing we can do to fix our sin. Only through confession and repentance to Jesus Christ can we become clean.

(v. 1-3)

#### – 2 –

**Judah had no freedom or choice, because of their sin.** When we come to Jesus Christ, He gives us our life back! We are free from the bonds of sin.

(v. 4-6)

#### – 3 –

**Sin has followed us through history.** Now because of the cross, we can choose to take Jesus Christ as LORD and we are free from the trappings of sin.

(v. 7-9)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

There is no excuse for sinning against God, other than our free choice. Everyone has a choice! Each and every day we must choose who we will follow. The best thing for us to do is to read our Bible, pray, and ask the LORD to help us to follow His Word each day.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**LORD, I WANT TO DO LIFE**  
**YOUR WAY. HELP ME TO**  
**HEAR YOU AND FOLLOW**  
**YOU TODAY.**



# Ezekiel

## EZEKIEL 1-4

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Ezekiel was a priest turned prophet who was taken captive during the exile of Judah and Jerusalem. He was carried off to Babylon before the final destruction of Jerusalem in which Nebuchadnezzar burned down everything including the Temple structure. God allowed this destruction because of the sins that had been done there for years. Interestingly, Ezekiel was a priest without a Temple and lived in the shadow of the rebellious and mighty Babylon. Yet it would be from here that he would proclaim some of the most important and consequential things ever revealed in the Bible. Like Daniel who existed in the Babylonian and Persian Empires, Ezekiel is more powerful than some might think. This man could perhaps appear to be mentally unstable, but he was spiritually astute. Ezekiel knew that God was speaking to the people and this prophet-priest wanted them to hear the LORD.

### DISCOVERING GOD — EZEKIEL 1:1-14

#### — 1 —

**Ezekiel was by the River Chebar in the shadow of ancient Babylon, when he had his vision.** The visions of God are not limited to where we are.

(v. 1)

#### — 2 —

**The vision of the four living creatures was direct and powerful.** The holiness of God is stunning and unique.

(v. 2-12)

#### — 3 —

**The creatures represent part of God's holy creation.** The LORD is bringing His holy creation back to us.

(v. 13-14)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

We often think of God working in our earthly culture to help us. But remember that our earthly life is not long in comparison to our eternal life in Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus makes us holy as we consistently move toward Him and follow Him as our Lord.

### TODAY'S PRAYER

**MY DESIRE IS TO MAKE  
YOU LORD OF MY LIFE.  
HELP ME TO SEEK YOUR  
WILL IN ALL MY  
DECISIONS.**

# Flee From Sin

## EZEKIEL 5-7

### DISCOVERING THE WORD

Sin is not simple, and it is not something that can easily be understood. It is complicated and messy, and our sin has unforeseen consequences not only on ourselves but often others as well. It is good for us then to stay away from it! Paul the apostle told the church at Corinth, “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body” (1 CORINTHIANS 6:18). We are to flee or to literally sprint away from sin. Proverbs says, “My son, do not walk in the way with them (sinners), keep your foot from their path” (PROVERBS 1:15). We are warned in the Bible, countless times, against sin and sinful ways. We are wise then to keep ourselves shy of the sin culture because it leads to nothing but shame, regret, and ultimately destruction.

### DISCOVERING GOD — EZEKIEL 7:1-12

#### — 1 —

**God judges the land of Judah for their sin.** Sin is not just inside of us it spills over into our lives and can ruin our property and possessions.

(v. 1-4)

#### — 2 —

**God shows the people that their sin has affected their entire life.** Sin has a destroying effect on what we own.

(v. 5-9)

#### — 3 —

**Sin had affected the culture of ancient Judah.** The cost of sin is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Through Jesus Christ, we will turn our culture around.

(v. 10-12)

### DISCOVERING THE TRUTH

Although we are all born in bondage to sin because of Adam’s rebellion in Eden, God sent Jesus Christ—the Last Adam—to set us free. When we turn our lives over to the Lord Jesus, He delivers us from the ravages of sin.

### TODAY’S PRAYER

**LORD, HELP ME TO TELL  
OTHERS AROUND ME ABOUT  
YOUR SAVING GRACE.**

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