

Chapter 4

"The Prophets"

Sadly, over the course of the next several generations, the Israelites went back to their old ways of worshipping other gods. God pleaded and warned the Israelites through the prophets, (i.e. Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others), to turn from their ways and seek repentance. Some did, but most didn't. The prophet's words of warning fell on deaf ears. [Ezekiel 36:22-29 \(NKJV\)](#) "22 Therefore, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. 23 And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD," says the Lord GOD, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. 24 For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. 25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. 28 Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. 29 I will deliver you from all your uncleanness.'" Out of their continual and flagrant disobedience, they provoked God's anger toward them. [2 Chronicles 36:15-16](#) "15 And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on his people, and on His dwelling place: 16 But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy." As Moses did earlier, Jeremiah called the Hebrews stiff-necked. [Jeremiah 7:23-26](#) "23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, "Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. 24 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward. 25 Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: 26 Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers." [Jeremiah 17:23 \(NIV\)](#) "Yet they did not listen or pay attention; they were stiff-necked and would not listen or respond to discipline."

Due to their stubbornness and refusal to worship only God and follow His commandments, they were subjected to punishment that again included being put into bondage and slavery in other countries. Their punishment decreed that the United Kingdom be split into two sections as a result of a civil war. The Bible tells us they were divided into the northern ten tribes called Israel and the southern two tribes of Judah and Benjamin called Judah (from where we get the term, Jew). In [2 Kings 17](#), God allowed the Assyrians to capture the northern ten tribes in 722 BCE, who were never to return, and fell from its place in history. Or would they? These became known as the "Lost Ten Tribes." By contrast, in [2 Kings chapters 24-25](#), God allowed the Babylonians to conquer the southern two tribes in 606 BCE and put them into exile, but only for a period of 70 years because they did not keep the Law of the Sabbath Year, as told to Moses above in [Leviticus 25](#). The Jews did not keep the Sabbath Year for 490 years. If we take the 490 years divided by 7, this equals 70 years owed to God. He always collects what is owed to Him. [Jeremiah 25:11](#) "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." Additionally, Solomon's temple was destroyed the first time along with its temple furniture and treasures within, including the Ark of the Covenant, which was taken back to Babylon as a prize. [2 Chronicles 36:18-21\(NIV\)](#) "18 He carried to Babylon all the articles from the temple of God, both large and small, and the treasures of the LORD's temple and the treasures of the king and his officials. 19 They set fire to God's temple and broke down the wall of Jerusalem; they burned all the palaces and destroyed everything of value there. 20 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. 21 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." Their exile also

served a purpose for keeping a remnant of the Israelites so David's lineage and so that the related prophecies could stay intact. [Ezra 9:7-8](#) “⁷ Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. ⁸ And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in His holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.” [Jeremiah 31:7](#) “For thus saith the LORD: “Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; publish ye, praise ye, and say, ‘O LORD, save Thy people, the remnant of Israel!” History confirms again what is written in the Bible. [Ezra 1:1-3](#) “¹ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, ² Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³ Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (He is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.” Jeremiah and Daniel were relatively contemporaries and ministered unto the southern two tribes of Judah. They also shared similar prophecies in that they revolve around the 70-year figure. This must be significant considering that Jeremiah's prophecy was completed for the full 70 years, but Daniel's prophecy has yet to be completed. We will examine “Daniel's 70-week prophecy” in detail as it relates to the end of days later in chapter 6.

Before we look at our next loop, let's step out of this narrative while we look at [Daniel](#) and the crucial role he played in relating to Israel and the end times. [Daniel's](#) story is important to the continuation of God's blessing to the Israelites. Through [Daniel](#), God revealed his plan for the world. In chapter 2, he interprets a dream for King Nebuchadnezzar. First, the dream. [Daniel 2:31-35 \(NKJV\)](#) “³¹ You, O king, were watching; and behold a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. ³² This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly, and thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.” Now, the interpretation. [Daniel 2:36-42 \(NKJV\)](#) “³⁶ This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ³⁷ You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; ³⁸ and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold. ³⁹ But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others. ⁴¹ Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.” The Great Statue has been studied by many scholars and historians. The most common conclusion suggests that the head of gold, chest and arms of silver, thighs of bronze, and legs of iron have all been played out in history, though the feet of iron and clay and 10 toes have yet to come. The premise of the coming one world leader is repeated to [Daniel](#) in [chapter 7](#) under when [Daniel](#) was living under King Belshazzar. [Daniel 7:23-25 \(NKJV\)](#) “²³ Thus he said: “The fourth Beast shall be the fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces. ²⁴ The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones

and shall subdue three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.” Finally, God brings Daniel’s mission purpose to an end. [Daniel 12:8-9](#) “⁸ And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? ⁹ And he said, “Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.” Notice that God only gave Daniel so much information. A promise of more information being revealed will come at the time of the end. We will expound on this when we unpack the Tribulation towards the end of this book.

Let’s get back to our storyline. God gave Isaiah specific prophecies of the coming Messiah. However, God also allowed the Jews to be blinded to the coming Messiah. [Isaiah 6:9-10](#) “⁹ And he said, Go, and tell this people, “Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. ¹⁰ Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.” Each time the Hebrews/Jews failed God, He extended Himself to get them to seek God, repent, and be redeemed. However, for the most part, they didn’t, which was to their detriment. History says that after Babylon (the head of gold in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream that [Daniel](#) interpreted in chapter 2) fell to Persia (as envisioned as the chest and arms of silver) in 539 BCE. In 536 BCE, under Cyrus, the King of Persia, the Jews were allowed to return and rebuild Solomon’s temple. This completed the 70 years owed to God as prophesied by Jeremiah. [2 Chronicles 36:22-23](#) “²² Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, ²³ Thus Cyrus king of Persia, “All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and He hath charged me to build Him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.”

In 470 BCE Persia was under a new king, Xerxes, who married a Jewish maiden, Esther. [Esther 2:17](#) “And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.” The King’s Viceroy, Haman, plotted against Esther’s uncle, Mordechai and the Jews, to have them hanged from the gallows because they would not worship him as God. When Esther exposed this plot to King Xerxes, he became enraged and had Haman hung on the same gallows. [Esther 7:9-10 \(NKJV\)](#) “⁹ Now Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the king, “Look! The gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke good on the king’s behalf, is standing at the house of Haman.” Then the king said, “Hang him on it!” ¹⁰ So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king’s wrath subsided.” This victory over genocide became known as the Festival of Purim, which is still observed today. The Old Testament closes out with 16 books of the Prophets. There are approximately 400 years of silence between the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament. We will address the two legs of iron from Daniel’s statue when we look at church history.

Before we proceed further, we need to remember the timeline and dates that are mentioned throughout. We have used dates in terms of BCE or AD as these dates are used on our Gentile civil calendar. The Jewish calendar is based on a lunar cycle with a 360-day year and a leap month every so often. It is sometimes referred to as a prophetic calendar. Our gentile civic calendar is based on a solar cycle with a 365-day year. For Jewish folks, the current year is 5778 (not 2018) and will change to 5779 in September at Rosh Hashanah. Without going into too many details, our calendar is based off a calendar reworked in the middle of the 3rd century called the Julian Calendar after Pope Julius I. It was based on the civil Roman calendar which was reworked by Pope Julius I. He calculated and decreed Jesus’ birth on December 25, and issued by edict to declare the year (AD 342). In 1582, Pope

Gregory XIII amended it to the form we use now, which was named after him, the Gregorian calendar. Most historians, both biblical and secular, agree the calculations were flawed. Jesus was actually born in September between 2 to 4 BCE. The Bible does not tell us how old He was when He began His three-year ministry, nor when He made His sacrifice, though this is guesstimated to be sometime between 27-33 AD. This difference in marking time will become more relevant as we progress.