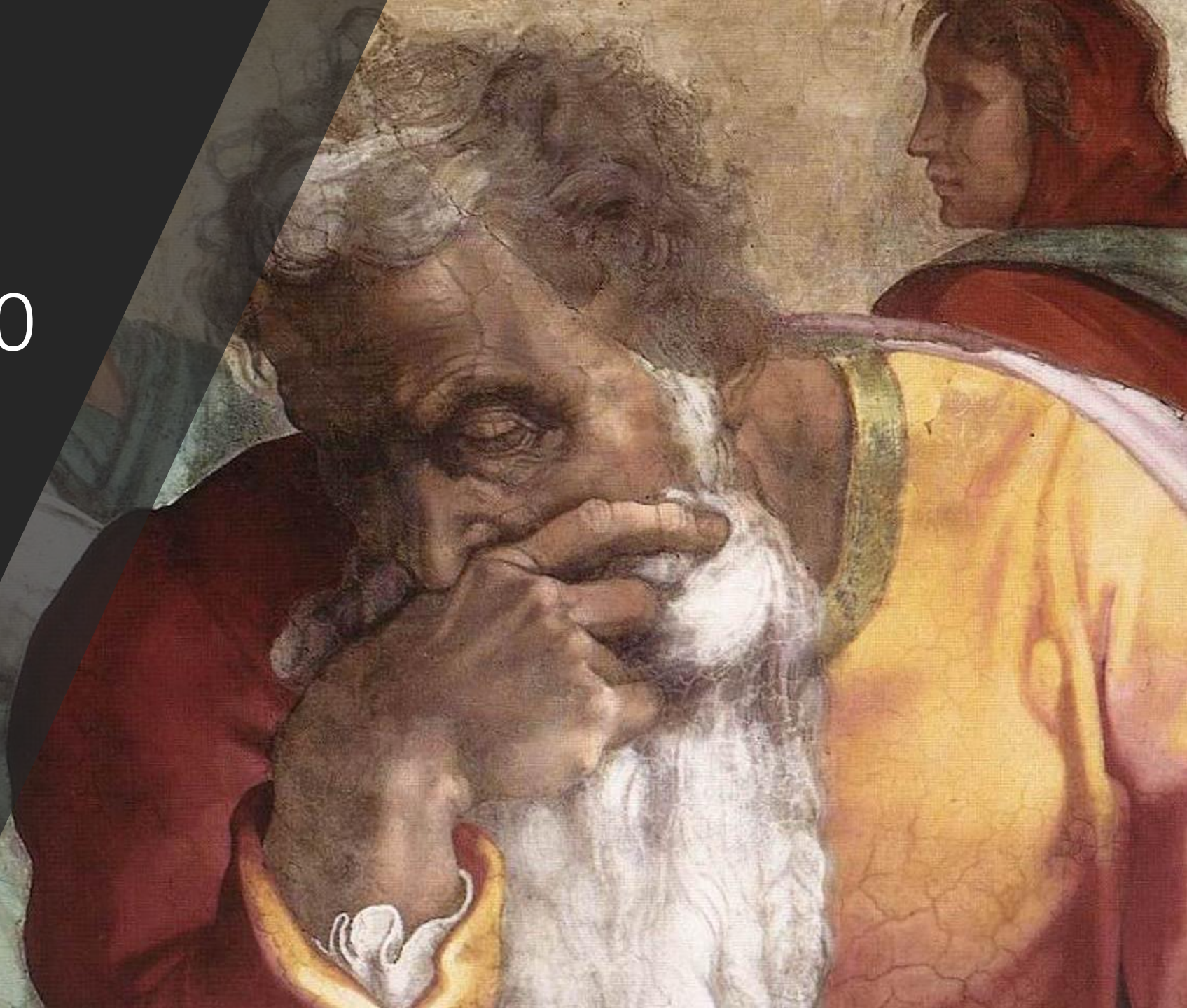


Jeremiah 1-20

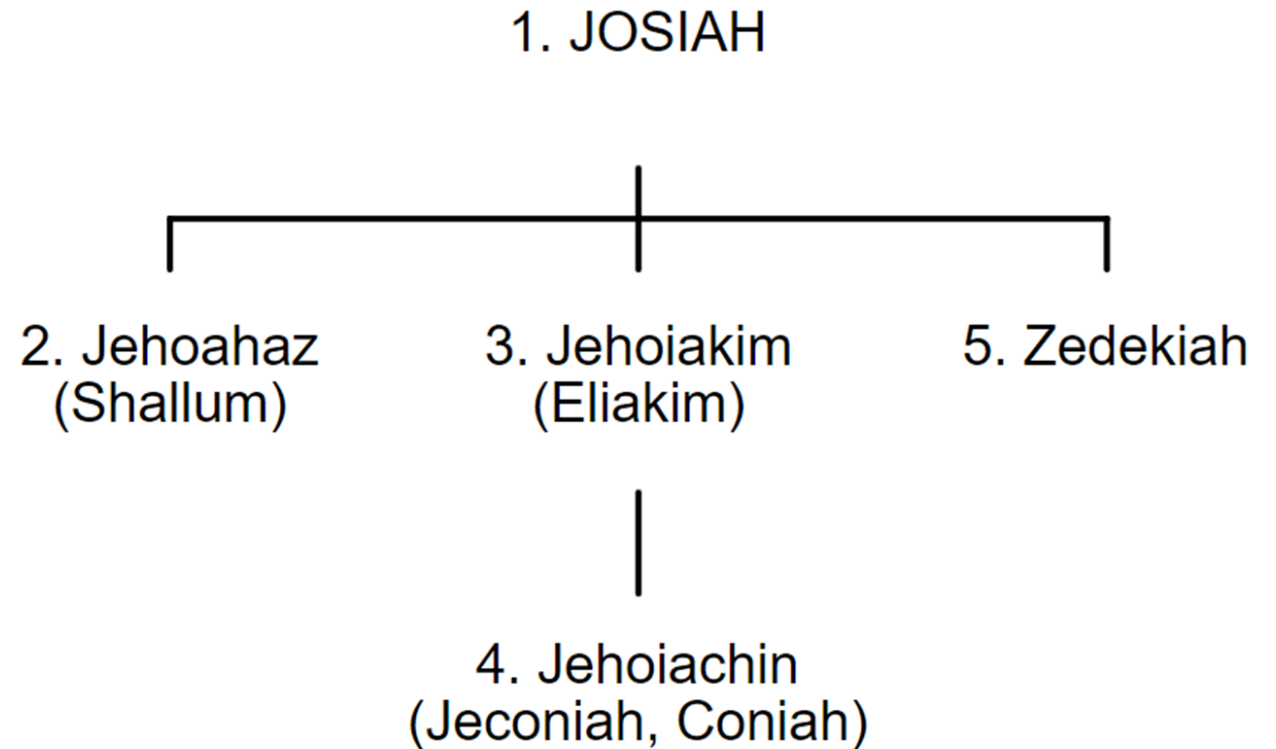
Come, Follow Me



Kings in Jeremiah's day

- Josiah 640-609 BCE
- Jehoahaz 609 (3 months)
- Jehoiakim 609-598 BCE
- Jehoiachin (3 months)
- Zedekiah 597-586 BCE

The Last Five Kings of Judah

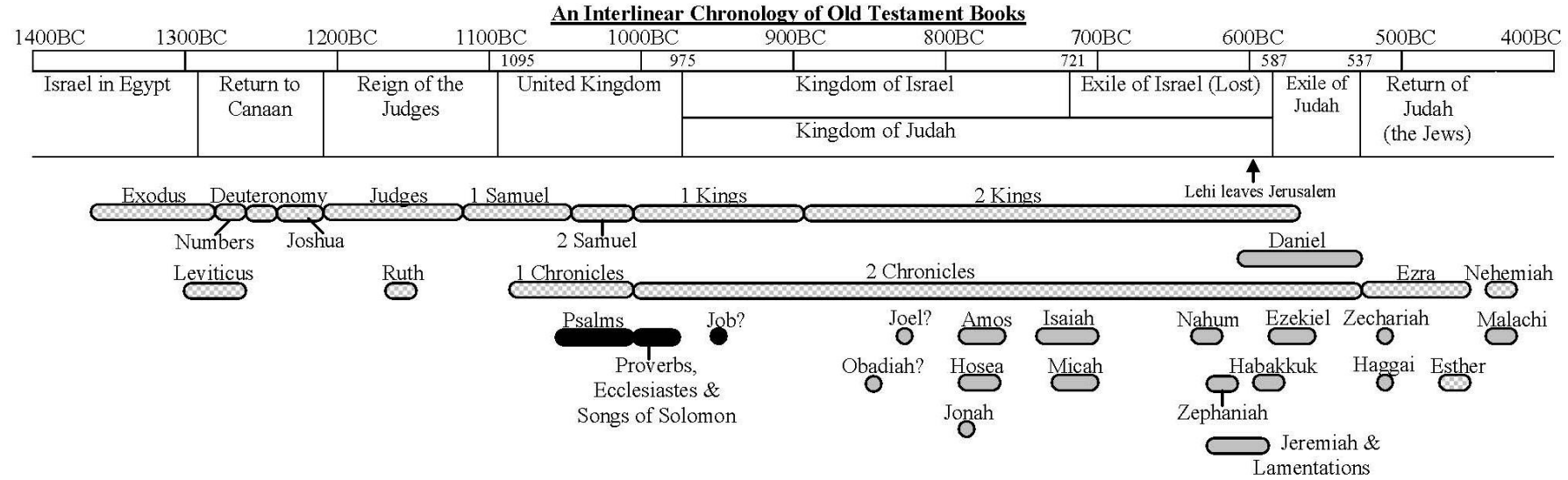


Jeremiah

According to Jeremiah 1:1, Jeremiah was “son of Hilkiyah, of the priests that were in Anathoth,” and began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah (627 BC). Anathoth was located no more than three miles northeast of Jerusalem. Jeremiah continued to prophesy until the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians.



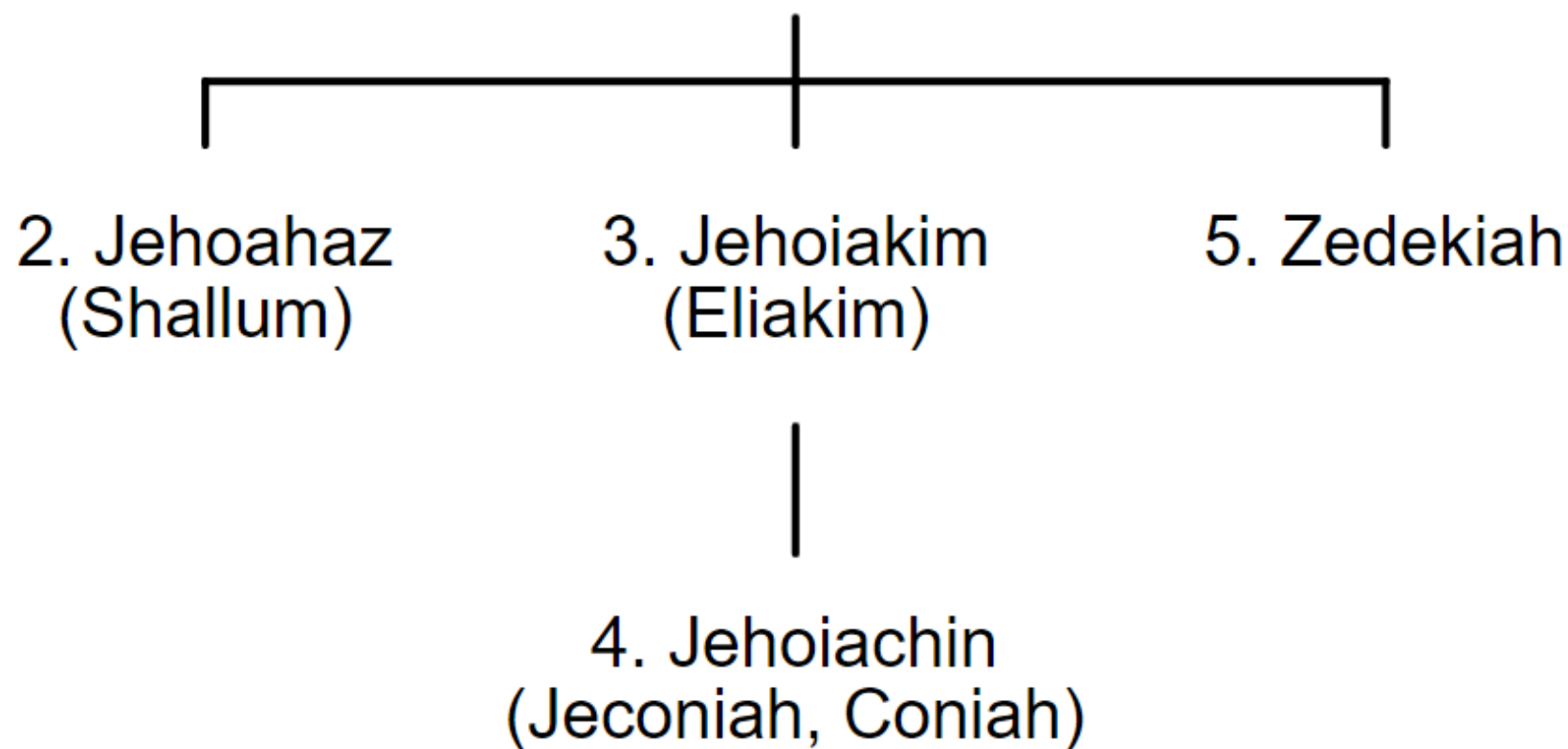
Jeremiah in Context



- What is happening historically?
- Who are Jeremiah's contemporaries?

The Last Five Kings of Judah

1. JOSIAH

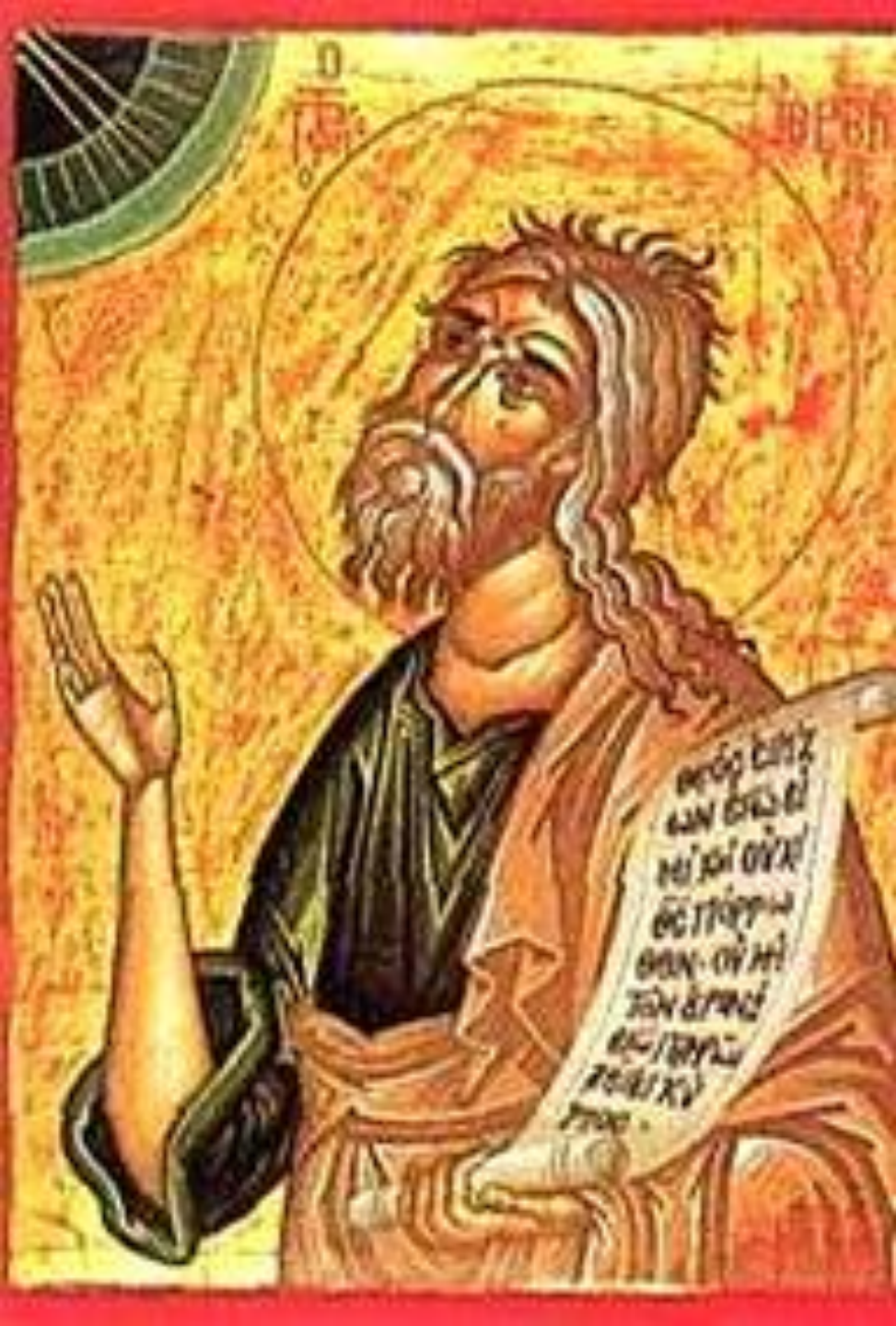


Timeline

Important Dates for Jeremiah		
Years	Events	References
643	Probable date of Jeremiah's birth	
640	Josiah becomes king of Judah at age 8	2 Chron. 34:1
628	Josiah begins his reforms	2 Chron. 34:3
627	Jeremiah begins his ministry	Jer. 1:2; 25:3
626	Nabopolassar founds the Neo-Babylonian Empire	
622	The book of the Law discovered in the temple	2 Chron. 34:8, 14
612	The fall of Nineveh, Assyria's capitol	
609	Josiah killed in battle by Egyptians at Megiddo	2 Chron. 35:20-25
	Jehoaḥaz reigns over Judah for 3 months	2 Chron. 36:1-3
	Jehoiakim made king of Judah by Pharaoh Neḥo	2 Chron. 36:4
605	Nebuchadnezzar defeats the Assyrians and the Egyptians at Carchemish	Jer. 46:2
	The first deportation of exiles (including Daniel) to Babylon	Dan. 1:1-7
604	Jehoiakim burns Jeremiah's first scroll	Jer. 36
601	Jehoiakim rebels against Babylon	2 Kings 24:1
598	Jehoiakim is deposed and dies	2 Chron. 36:3
	Jehoiachin reigns over Judah for 3 months	2 Kings 24:8
597	The second deportation of exiles (including Jehoiachin) to Babylon	2 Kings 24:12-16
	Zedekiah made king of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar	2 Kings 24:17
593	Zedekiah summoned to Babylon	Jer. 51:59
588	Zedekiah is besieged in Jerusalem for treachery	Jer. 52:3-4
586	Fall of Jerusalem	Jer. 39
	Gedaliah appointed governor of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar	Jer. 40:5-6
	Gedaliah assassinated by Ishmael	Jer. 41:2
	Judean refugees flee to Egypt taking Jeremiah with them	Jer. 42—43
581	The third deportation of exiles to Babylon	Jer. 52:30
568	Nebuchadnezzar invades Egypt	Jer. 43:8-13; 46:13-26
561	Jehoiachin released from prison in Babylon	Jer. 52:31-34
539	Fall of Babylon to Cyrus the Persian (considered by some scholars to be the same ruler as Darius the Mede)	Dan. 5:30-31
538	Cyrus issues his decree allowing the Jews to return to Palestine	Ezra 1:1-4

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Jeremiah's Confessions

S. Kent Brown argues that the supposed Scythian invasion that everyone thought was to happen but did not, was the reason everyone turned against Jeremiah and Jeremiah began to question the Lord.

S. Kent Brown, [History and Jeremiah's Crisis of Faith](#), *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*, BYU Religious Studies Center, p. 107.

Jeremiah's Confessions

Jeremiah gives a series of “confessions” that show that he is deeply disappointed in the supposed unfulfilled prophecies, thus considering that God has abandoned him. Brown writes that “in these solemn dirges one plainly sees that Jeremiah passed through a crisis which shook his faith in the Lord.” He lays out the following dirges, showing Jeremiah’s frustration with the Lord and the supposed unfulfilled nature of his prophecy:

Jeremiah's Confessions

- Jeremiah 11.18–12.6 – People in his hometown plot to kill Jeremiah.
- 15.10–21 – Jeremiah laments, referring to God as “failing waters.” The Lord promises him protection.
- 17.9-10, 14–18 – Jeremiah’s enemies cry out “Where is the word of the Lord?” and Jeremiah begs for it to “come now!”
- 18.18–23 – Jeremiah pleads with the Lord that his enemies suffer.
- 20.7–12, 14–18 – Jeremiah states that he has been deceived and speaks of his dissonance in poignant speech. He wishes that he was never born.



The Invasion that Never Happened

The fifth century BC historian Herodotus tells his hearers that that the Scythians, after becoming masters of Asia, marched south intending to invade Egypt. On their way they passed along the coastline of Syria and Palestine, a movement which surely was known to the inhabitants of Judah and would have spread fear among the inhabitants. Arriving at the border of Egypt, between the Philistine kingdom and the Delta region, the Scythians were met by Pharaoh Psammetichos and were bribed with gifts and persuaded not to invade the Nile Valley.

(Herodotus, [*The Histories*, 1.103–6.](#))

The Invasion that Never Happened

Brown relates that this invasion that never happened is what the people in Jerusalem expected in connection to the prophecies of the enemy coming from the north, at least in the early oracles of Jeremiah. Brown argues that the Scythians and their incursion into the lands surrounding Judah happened before 616 BC, within a decade of Jeremiah's call. The dates line up to make this theory plausible, that the invasion that didn't happen was the Scythian invasion, and Jeremiah's accusation that God had deceived him (Jer. 20.7) can be connected to this invasion that never happened. Of course, later in his ministry, Jeremiah cites the Babylonians as the ones coming from the north, but this can be seen as the political chess pieces become more pronounced. See Brown, p. 108-110.

History

Near the time of the **Battle of Carchemish**, in 605, when the Babylonians decisively defeated the Egyptians and the remnant of the Assyrians, Jeremiah delivered an oracle against Egypt. Realizing that this battle made a great difference in the world situation, Jeremiah soon dictated to his scribe, Baruch, a scroll containing all of the messages he had delivered to this time. The scroll was read by Baruch in the Temple. Subsequently it was read before **King Jehoiakim (609-598)**, who cut it into pieces and burned it. Jeremiah went into hiding and dictated another scroll, with additions.

When **Jehoiakim withheld tribute from the Babylonians** (about 601), Jeremiah began to warn the Judaeans that they would be destroyed at the hands of those who had previously been their friends. When the King persisted in resisting Babylonia, Nebuchadrezzar sent an army to besiege Jerusalem. King Jehoiakim died before the siege began and was succeeded by his son, **Jehoiachin**, who **surrendered the capital to the Babylonians on March 16, 597**, and was taken to Babylonia with many of his subjects.

History

The Babylonians placed on the throne of Judah a king favorable to them, **Zedekiah (597–586 BCE)**, who was more inclined to follow Jeremiah's counsel than Jehoiakim had been but was weak and vacillating and whose court was torn by conflict between pro-Babylonian and pro-Egyptian parties. **After paying Babylonia tribute for nearly 10 years, the King made an alliance with Egypt.** A second time Nebuchadrezzar sent an army to Jerusalem, which he captured in August 586.

Early in Zedekiah's reign, Jeremiah wrote a letter to the exiles in Babylonia, advising them not to expect to return immediately to their homeland, as false prophets were encouraging them to believe, but to settle peaceably in their place of exile and seek the welfare of their captors. When emissaries from surrounding states came to Judah in 594 to enlist Judah's support in rebellion against Babylonia, Jeremiah put a yoke upon his neck and went around proclaiming that Judah and the surrounding states should submit to the yoke of Babylonia, for it was Yahweh who had given them into the hand of the King of Babylonia. Even to the time of the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah's message remained the same: submit to the yoke of Babylonia.

History

When the siege of Jerusalem was temporarily lifted at the approach of an Egyptian force, Jeremiah started to leave Jerusalem to go to the land of the tribe of Benjamin. **He was arrested on a charge of desertion and placed in prison.** Subsequently he was placed in an abandoned cistern, where he would have died had it not been for the prompt action of an Ethiopian eunuch, Ebed-Melech (Jer. 38.6-10), who rescued the prophet with the King's permission and put him in a less confining place. King Zedekiah summoned him from prison twice for secret interviews, and both times **Jeremiah advised him to surrender to Babylonia.**

Jeremiah's final days

When Jerusalem finally fell, Jeremiah was released from prison by the Babylonians and offered safe conduct to Babylonia, but he preferred to remain with his own people. So he was entrusted to Gedaliah, a Judaeen from a prominent family whom the Babylonians appointed as governor of the province of Judah. The prophet continued to oppose those who wanted to rebel against Babylonia and promised the people a bright and joyful future.

After Gedaliah was assassinated, **Jeremiah was taken against his will to Egypt** by some of the Jews (Jer. 43) who feared reprisal from the Babylonians. Even in Egypt he continued to rebuke his fellow exiles. Jeremiah probably died about 570 BCE. According to a tradition that is preserved in extrabiblical sources, **he was stoned to death by his exasperated fellow countrymen in Egypt.**

(J. Philip Hyatt, Jeremiah: Hebrew Prophet, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed 4.1.2019. See: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jeremiah-Hebrew-prophet>)

Jeremiah is so much more than destruction!

Prophecies of judgment to the Israel – chapters 1-25

Judgment prophecies to the nations – chapters 46-51

Prophecies of consolation to Israel – chapters 30-33

Disputations – chapters 32, 36-41

Covenant speeches – 7:1-15; 11:1-14

Symbolic Acts – 13:1-11; 18:1-9, 19-20, 27

Prophetic visions – 25:15-29

Poetic and individual laments – chapters 11-20

Biographical stories about the prophet – chapters 26-37; 40-44



Jeremiah's call narrative – Jeremiah 1

“Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world was. I suppose I was ordained to this very office in that Grand Council” (Joseph Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 365).



Joseph Smith Jr.

What was happening?

Van der Toorn (2007) is well informed about the scribal practice in the Ancient Near East that constituted the context within which Israelite, Judahite and early Jewish scribal practice developed. In his reconstruction of the production of a prophetic book such as Jeremiah, Van der Toorn (2007:182-204) discerns different types of scribal activity that explains the genesis of a prophetic text:

- While copying a text, the **scribes also composed new material** that was added to the written tradition being copied.
- **Scribes also expanded the texts they rewrote texts.** The Greek text of Jeremiah is significantly shorter than the existing Hebrew text and Jeremiah texts found at Khirbet Qumran. Additional details and clarification were added and led to what is currently the Masoretic Text.
- Another scribal technique "was the wholesale adaptation of material into a new context" (Wilson 2010:103). The complaint in Jeremiah 23:30 might be a "possible reference to the scribal adaptation of prophetic material at the written or oral level".

Josiah's Reforms

Theologically, Josiah and Hilkiah's top-down purge of the religion of Israel was a triumph. Embraced by the elites, it became the new orthodoxy. Prior to Josiah, there had been a divine family and a council of gods. But Deuteronomy declared, "Hear, O Israel. The Lord our God is one Lord.... I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me" (Deuteronomy 6: 4; 32: 39). That became the new orthodoxy. Exodus had affirmed that the leaders of Israel saw a corporeal God (Exodus 24: 10). But Deuteronomy, in an obvious attempt to change that theology, belabored the point that "ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice...for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb: Lest ye ... make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure ... male or female" (Deuteronomy 4: 12, 15-16). That God is incorporeal and that the female divinity Asherah was an abomination became the orthodox religion.

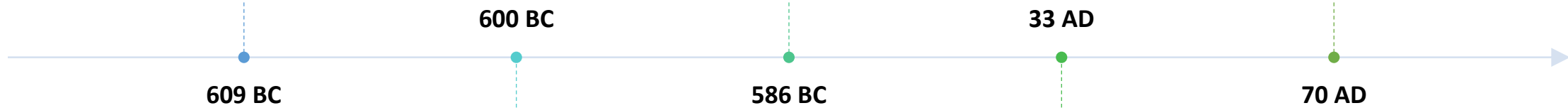
(William Dever speaks of "the elites of the day—in this case, the right-wing, ultranationalist religious parties who wrote the Bible" *Did God Have a Wife?*, 60. See also Margaret Barker, *Mother of the Lord*, 122. See also Joan Taylor, *The Asherah, the Menorah and the Sacred Tree*, 48, 50)



King Josiah's reforms (640-609 BC) – all high places removed, centralized worship instituted, the Asherah was removed from the temple. (See 2 Kings 23)

The temple destroyed – 600 BC

The temple is destroyed – 70 AD



Lehi and family leave Jerusalem – 600 BC

Jesus Christ is rejected by the leadership of Jewry – 33 AD



King Josiah's reforms (640-609 BC) – all high places removed, centralized worship instituted, the Asherah was removed from the temple. See 2 Kings 23. The “Book of the Law” is discovered (presumably Deuteronomy). This law forbids sacrificial worship outside Jerusalem (Deut. 12), severely limits prophets' visions (Deut. 13), designates the Levites priests (not the Aaronids - Deut. 17), makes God a formless voice (Deut. 4:12), and forbids belief in “the hosts of heaven” (Deut. 4:19-20).

Lehi and family leave Jerusalem (600 BC). Lehi sees “the hosts of heaven” (1 Nephi 1:8-10), they make altars outside of Jerusalem (1 Nephi 2:7), Lehi was a “visionary man” who was admitted into the Divine Council (1 Nephi 2:11). Lehi was a *hozeh* – הֲזֵן – something the Deuteronomists would have hated!

The temple destroyed (600-586 BC)

Jesus Christ is rejected by the leadership of Jewry (33 AD)

The temple is destroyed (70 AD)

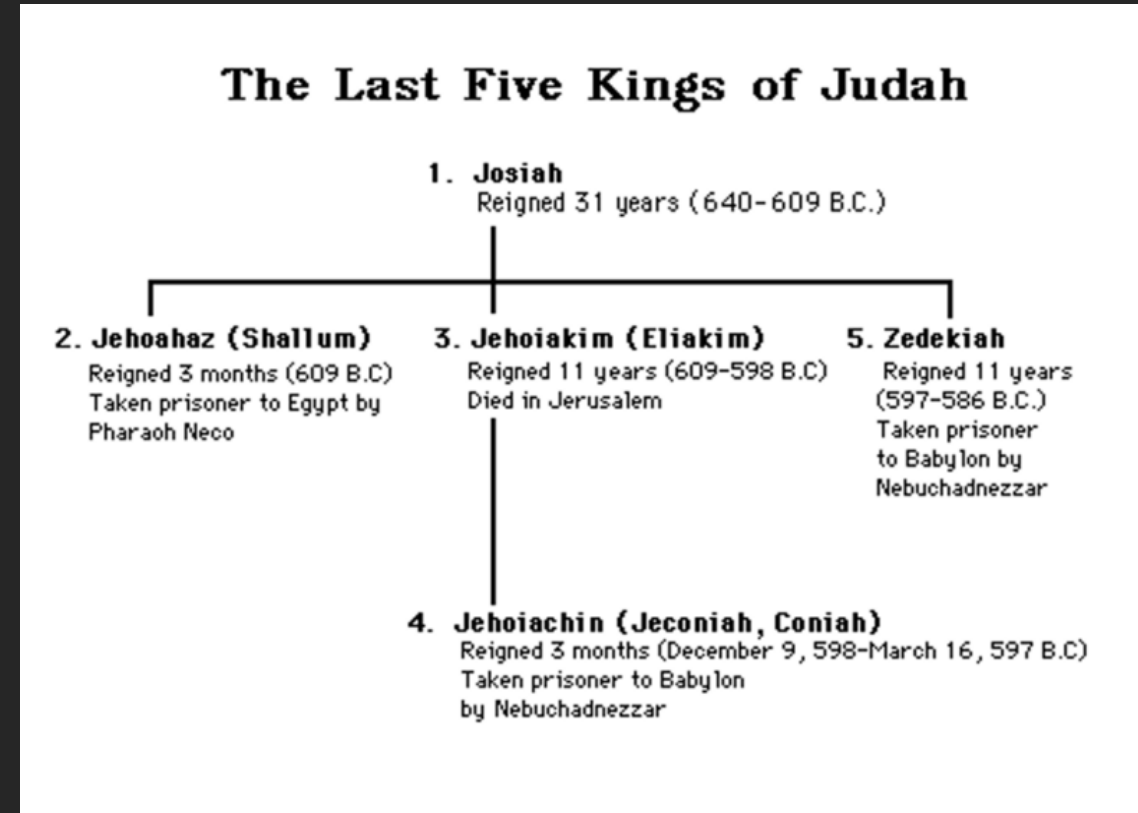
A sense of impending doom

Jeremiah 4:19-23 Creation is being undone, Jerusalem will face doom.

Jeremiah is especially impatient with those who proclaim “peace” when there is none! – Jeremiah 8:11

Jeremiah criticizes the King

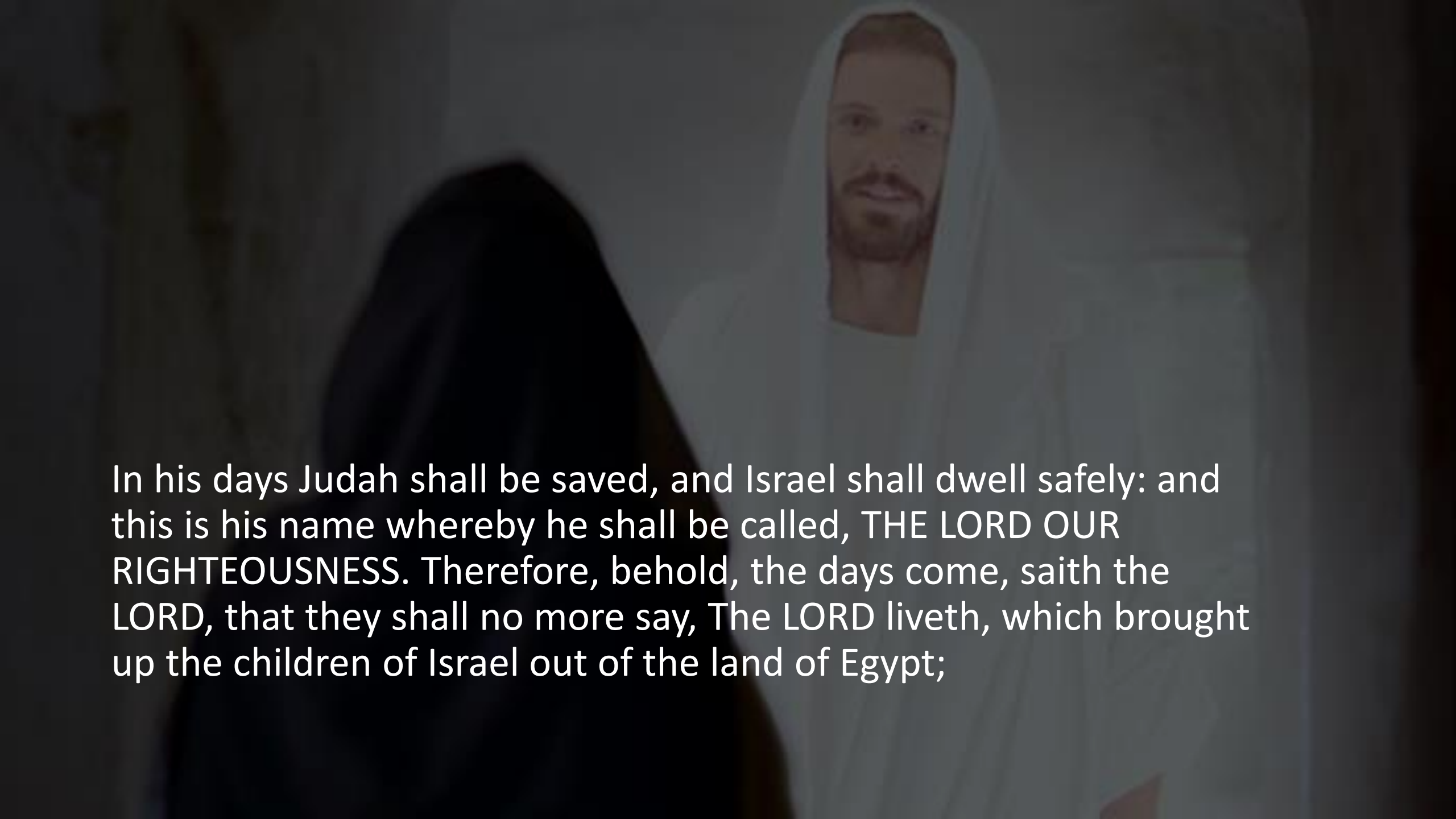
1. Critical of all, prophets to the priests – 8:10-11
2. Critical of the priests in Jerusalem – 6:20
3. Critical of the King (Jehoiakim) – 22:13-19
4. Coniah's curse pronounced - see 22:28-30



Jeremiah offers
hope - Jer. 23.5-8

A new king? Who could this be? A
righteous BRANCH

צֶמַח with suffix צִמְחִי *a sprout*, always [?]
collect. *things which sprout forth* from the earth,
produce, fruit of the earth, Gen. 19:25; Hos. 8:7;
Eze. 16:7; Ps. 65:11. Hence יְהוָה צֶמַח Isaiah 4:2,
the produce of Jehovah, i. e. the produce of the holy



In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

A dimly lit scene featuring two individuals. On the right, a man with a beard and mustache is wearing a white hoodie and looking towards the camera. On the left, a woman is wearing a black hoodie, her face mostly obscured by shadow. The background is dark and indistinct.

But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land. (Jer. 23.7-8)