

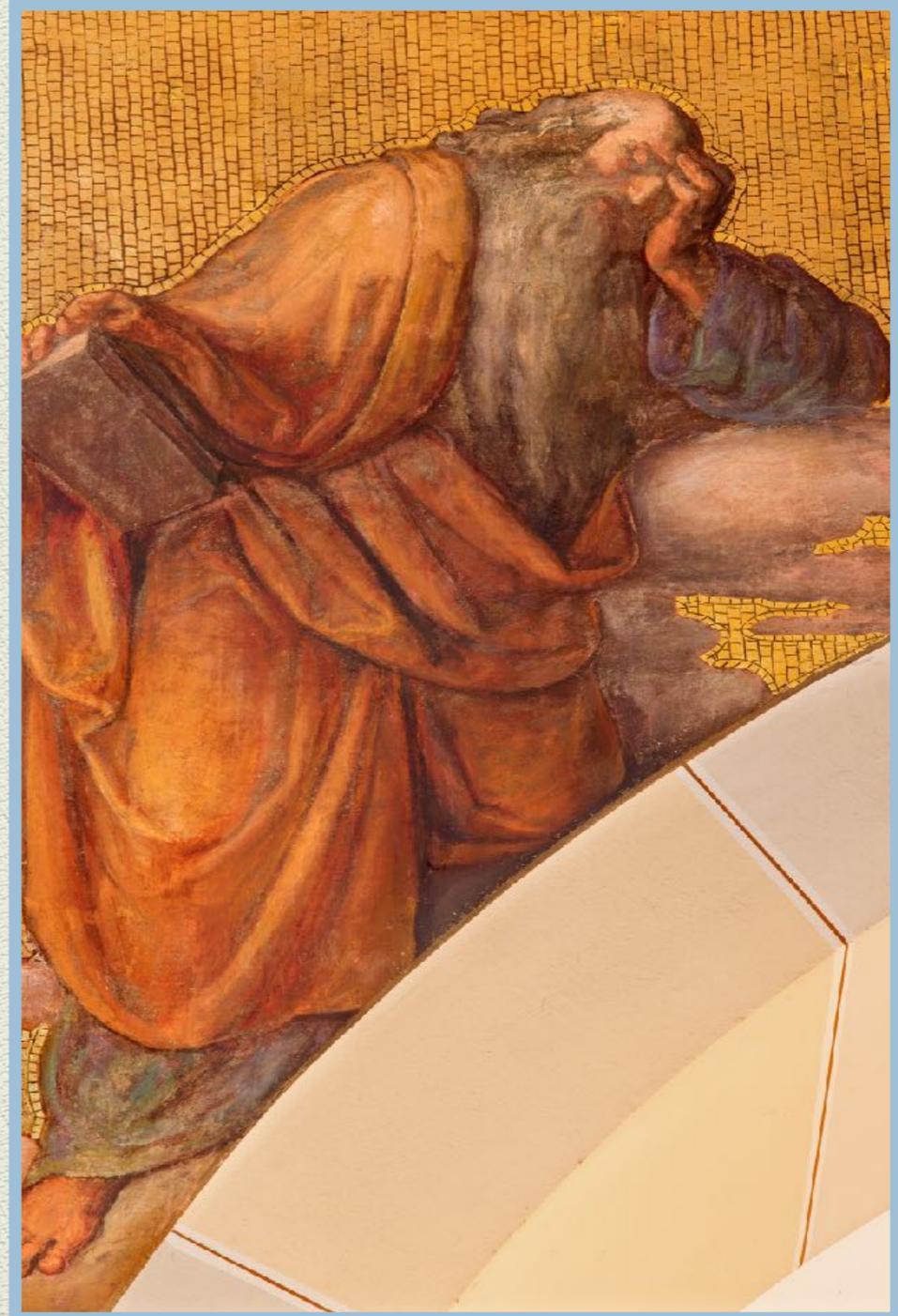
Lessons from the Old Testament

Lesson 8—Jeremiah 36:19–31

“Jehoiakim’s Wickedness”

The Weeping Prophet

Therefore thou shalt say
this word unto them;
Let mine eyes run down
with **tears night and
day**, and let them not
cease: For the virgin
daughter of my people
is broken with a great
breach, with a very
grievous blow.
(Jeremiah 14:17)





Jeremiah 31:39

In my dream a **sentinel** stood at the door of an important building, and **asked every one** who came for entrance, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost?” A **measuring-line** was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building. “Your size as a human being is nothing,” he said. “But if you have reached the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, according to the knowledge you have had, you will receive an appointment to sit with Christ at the marriage supper of the Lamb; and through the eternal ages, you will never cease to learn of the blessings granted in the banquet prepared for you. (1SM 109.2)

“You may be tall and well-proportioned in self, but you cannot enter here. None can enter who are grown-up children, carrying with them the disposition, the habits, and the characteristics which pertain to children. If you have nurtured suspicions, criticism, temper, self-dignity, you cannot be admitted; for you would spoil the feast. All who go in through this door have on the wedding garment, woven in the loom of heaven. Those who educate themselves to pick flaws in the characters of others, reveal a deformity that makes families unhappy, that turns souls from the truth to choose fables. Your leaven of distrust, your want of confidence, your power of accusing, closes against you the door of admittance. Within this door nothing can enter that could possibly mar the happiness of the dwellers by marring their **perfect trust in one another**. You cannot join the happy family in the heavenly courts; for I have wiped all tears from their eyes. You can never see the King in His beauty if you are not yourself a representative of His character. (1SM 110.1)

“When you give up your own will, your own wisdom, and learn of Christ, you will find admittance into the kingdom of God. He requires entire, unreserved surrender. Give up your life for Him to order, mold, and fashion. Take upon your neck His yoke. Submit to be led and taught by Him. Learn that unless you become as a little child, you can never enter the kingdom of heaven. (1SM 110.2)

“Abiding in Christ is choosing only the disposition of Christ, so that His interests are identified with yours. Abide in Him, to be and to do only what He wills. These are the conditions of discipleship, and unless they are complied with, you can never find rest. Rest is in Christ; it cannot be as something apart from Him. (1SM 110.3)

“The moment His yoke is adjusted to your neck, that moment it is found easy; then the heaviest spiritual labor can be performed, the heaviest burdens borne, because the Lord gives the strength and the power, and He gives gladness in doing the work. Mark the points: ‘Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart’ (Matthew 11:29). Who is it that speaks thus?—The Majesty of heaven, the King of glory. He desires that your conception of spiritual things shall be purified from the dross of selfishness, the defilement of a crooked, coarse, unsympathetic nature. You must have an inward, higher experience. You must obtain a growth in grace by abiding in Christ. When you are converted, you will not be a hindrance, but will strengthen your brethren.” (1SM 110.4)

As these words were spoken, I saw that some turned sadly away and mingled with the scoffers. Others, with tears, all broken in heart, made confession to those whom they had bruised and wounded. They did not think of maintaining their own dignity, but asked at every step, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). The answer was, "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may go beforehand to judgment, and be blotted out." Words were spoken which rebuked [sic] spiritual pride. This God will not tolerate. It is inconsistent with His Word and with our profession of faith. Seek the Lord, all ye who are ministers of His. Seek Him while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). (1SM 111.1)

As I presented these principles to the people in the Sabbath meeting, all seemed to feel that the Lord had spoken through the feeble instrument.—*The Review and Herald*, April 11, 1899.

The time has come when we must expect the Lord to do great things for us. Our efforts must not flag or weaken. We are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. **Before the work is closed up and the sealing of God's people is finished, we shall receive the outpouring of the Spirit of God.** Angels from heaven will be in our midst. The present is a fitting-up time for heaven when we must walk in full obedience to all the commands of God.—Letter 30, 1907.

(1SM 111.2–.3)

Jeremiah 31:39

Ezekiel 9:4

Sigh and cry

Man with the writer's inkhorn

The angels of God do his bidding, holding back the winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree, until the servants of God should be **sealed** in their foreheads. The mighty angel is seen ascending from the East (or sun rising). This **mightiest of angels has in his hand the seal of the living God**, or of him who alone can give life, who can inscribe upon the foreheads the mark or inscription, to whom shall be granted immortality, eternal life. It is the voice of this highest angel that had authority to command the four angels to keep in check the four winds until this work [of **sealing**] was performed, and until he should give the summons to let them loose. (*PH077* 23.3 [Pamphlet 077 “The Sin of Licentiousness”])

Those that overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil, will be the favored ones who shall receive the **seal** of the living God. Those whose hands are not clean, whose hearts are not pure, will not have the seal of the living God. Those who are planning sin and acting it, will be passed by. Only those who, in their attitude before God, are filling the position of those who are repenting and confessing their sins in the great antitypical day of atonement, will be recognized and marked as worthy of God's protection. The names of those who are steadfastly looking and waiting and watching for the appearing of their Saviour,—more earnestly and wishfully than they who wait for the morning,—will be numbered with those **who are sealed**.

(PH077 24.1)

Those who, while having all the light of truth flashing upon their souls, should have works corresponding to their avowed faith, but are allured by sin, setting up idols in their hearts, corrupting their souls before God, and polluting those who unite with them in sin, **will have their names blotted out of the Book of Life**, and be left in midnight darkness, having no oil in their vessels with their lamps. “Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.”

(PH077 24.1)

This sealing of the servants of God is the same that was shown to Ezekiel in vision. John also had been a witness of this most startling revelation. He saw the sea and the waves roaring, and men's hearts failing them for fear. He beheld the earth moved, and the mountains carried into the midst of the sea (which is literally transpiring), the water thereof roaring and troubled, and the mountains shaking with the swelling thereof. He was shown plagues, pestilence, famine, and death performing their terrible mission. (*PH077 25.1*)

The same angel who visited Sodom is sounding the note of warning, "Escape for thy life." The bottles of God's wrath cannot be poured out to destroy the wicked and their works, until all the people of God have been judged, and the cases of the living as well as the dead are decided. **And even after the saints are sealed** with the seal of the living God, his elect will have trials individually. Personal afflictions will come; but the furnace is closely watched by an eye that will not suffer the gold to be consumed. The indelible mark of God is upon them. God can plead that his own name is written there. The Lord has shut them in. Their destination is inscribed—"GOD, NEW JERUSALEM." **They are God's property, his possession.**
(PH077 25.2)

Gabriel occupies the position from which Lucifer fell (DA 693; GC 493), and stands next in honor and rank to Christ Himself (DA 98, 99, 234; Dan. 10:21). It was Gabriel who appeared to Daniel (Dan. 8:16; 9:21) to announce the coming of “the Messiah the Prince” (Dan. 9:25). In NT times he appeared to Zacharias (Luke 1:19), to Mary (vs. 26, 27), and probably it was he who appeared to Joseph (see on Matt. 1:20). It was Gabriel who strengthened Christ in Gethsemane (DA 693), who intervened between Him and the mob (DA 694), and who opened the tomb and bade the Saviour come forth (DA 779, 780). Gabriel was also one of the two angels who accompanied Christ through life (DA 793) and appeared to the disciples on Olivet as Christ ascended to heaven (DA 832; cf. 780). It was Gabriel who appeared to John on Patmos (DA 99; see on Rev. 1:1) and who spoke of himself as “thy fellowservant, and [the fellowservant] of thy brethren the prophets” (Rev. 22:9).

(SDA BC on Luke 1:19)

- ◆ ...the mighty angel who stands in God's presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell, came to the side of Christ. (*DA* 693.3)
- ◆ Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and who stood highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven. Before his fall, Lucifer was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled. (*GC* 493.3)
- ◆ Luke 1:19, 26; Daniel 8:16, 9:21
- ◆ It was Gabriel, the angel next in rank to the Son of God, who came with the divine message to Daniel. It was Gabriel, "His angel," whom Christ sent to open the future to the beloved John; and a blessing is pronounced on those who read and hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things written therein. Revelation 1:3. (*DA* 234.2)

◆ In this awful crisis, when everything was at stake, when the mysterious cup trembled in the hand of the sufferer, the heavens opened, a light shone forth amid the stormy darkness of the crisis hour, and **the mighty angel who stands in God's presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell, came to the side of Christ.** The angel came not to take the cup from Christ's hand, but to strengthen Him to drink it, with the assurance of the Father's love. He came to give power to the divine-human suppliant. He pointed Him to the open heavens, telling Him of the souls that would be saved as the result of His sufferings. He assured Him that His Father is greater and more powerful than Satan, that His death would result in the utter discomfiture of Satan, and that the kingdom of this world would be given to the saints of the Most High. He told Him that He would see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied, for He would see a multitude of the human race saved, eternally saved. (*DA 693.3*)

- ◆ The sleeping disciples had been suddenly awakened by the light surrounding the Saviour. They saw the angel bending over their prostrate Master. They saw him lift the Saviour's head upon his bosom, and point toward heaven. They heard his voice, like sweetest music, speaking words of comfort and hope. (*DA* 693.3)
- ◆ No traces of His recent agony were visible as Jesus stepped forth to meet His betrayer. Standing in advance of His disciples He said, "Whom seek ye?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am He." As these words were spoken, **the angel** who had lately ministered to Jesus moved between Him and the mob. A divine light illuminated the Saviour's face, and a dovelike form overshadowed Him. In the presence of this divine glory, the murderous throng could not stand for a moment. They staggered back. Priests, elders, soldiers, and even Judas, fell as dead men to the ground. (*DA* 694.5)
- ◆ The angel withdrew, and the light faded away. Jesus had opportunity to escape, but He remained, calm and self-possessed. As one glorified He stood in the midst of that hardened band, now prostrate and helpless at His feet. The disciples looked on, silent with wonder and awe. (*DA* 694.6)

- ◆ The night of the first day of the week had worn slowly away. The darkest hour, just before daybreak, had come. Christ was still a prisoner in His narrow tomb. The great stone was in its place; the Roman seal was unbroken; the Roman guards were keeping their watch. And there were unseen watchers. Hosts of evil angels were gathered about the place. Had it been possible, the prince of darkness with his apostate army would have kept forever sealed the tomb that held the Son of God. But a heavenly host surrounded the sepulcher. Angels that excel in strength were guarding the tomb, and waiting to welcome the Prince of life. (*DA 779.1*)
- ◆ “And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven.” Clothed with the panoply of God, this angel left the heavenly courts. The bright beams of God’s glory went before him, and illuminated his pathway. “His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.” (*DA 779.2*)

◆ Now, priests and rulers, where is the power of your guard? Brave soldiers that have never been afraid of human power are now as captives taken without sword or spear. The face they look upon is not the face of mortal warrior; it is the face of the mightiest of the Lord's host. **This messenger** is he who fills the position from which Satan fell. It is he who on the hills of Bethlehem proclaimed Christ's birth. The earth trembles at his approach, the hosts of darkness flee, and as he rolls away the stone, heaven seems to come down to the earth. The soldiers see him removing the stone as he would a pebble, and hear him cry, Son of God, come forth; Thy Father calls Thee. They see Jesus come forth from the grave, and hear Him proclaim over the rent sepulcher, "I am the resurrection, and the life." As He comes forth in majesty and glory, the angel host bow low in adoration before the Redeemer, and welcome Him with songs of praise. (DA 779.3)

- ◆ While the disciples were still gazing upward, voices addressed them which sounded like richest music. They turned, and saw two angels in the form of men, who spoke to them, saying, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” (*DA 831.1*)
- ◆ These angels were of the company that had been waiting in a shining cloud to escort Jesus to His heavenly home. The most exalted of the angel throng, they were the two who had come to the tomb at Christ’s resurrection, and they had been with Him throughout His life on earth. With eager desire all heaven had waited for the end of His tarrying in a world marred by the curse of sin. The time had now come for the heavenly universe to receive their King. Did not the two angels long to join the throng that welcomed Jesus? But in sympathy and love for those whom He had left, they waited to give them comfort. “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Hebrews 1:14. (*DA 832.1*)

- ◆ And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full. (Psalm 78:24–25)
- ◆ They became weary of the food prepared for them **by angels**, and sent them from Heaven. (*4aSG* 15.1)
- ◆ Some found fault with one thing, and some with another, as did the murmurers among the children of Israel when Moses was their leader. Some were censuring our course, saying that we were not as conservative as we ought to be; we did not seek to please the people as we might; we talked too plainly; we reprov'd too sharply. Some were talking in regard to Sister White's dress, picking at straws. Others were expressing dissatisfaction with the course that Brother White pursued, and remarks were passing from one to another, questioning their course and finding fault. **An angel** stood before these persons, unseen by them, busily writing their words in the book which is to be opened to the view of God and angels. (*3T* 312.3)

Jeremiah 31:27–37 (The New
Covenant–v. 31)

Jeremiah 32:37–42

Jeremiah 33:19–21, 25–26 (CR 31:35–37)

Jeremiah 36:19–31

This chapter is a record of historical events that will be repeated. Let all who desire to receive warning, read carefully.

(MS65 1912, par. 21)

Jeremiah called their attention repeatedly to the counsels given in **Deuteronomy**. More than any other of the prophets, he emphasized the teachings of the Mosaic law and showed how these might bring the highest spiritual blessing to the nation and to every individual heart. “Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein,” he pleaded, “and ye shall find rest for your souls.”

Jeremiah 6:16. (*PK 411.1*)

On one occasion, by command of the Lord, the prophet took his position at one of the principal entrances to the city and there urged the importance of keeping holy the Sabbath day. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were in danger of losing sight of the sanctity of the Sabbath, and they were solemnly warned against following their secular pursuits on that day. (*PK 411.2*; see Jeremiah 17:19–25)

As God's church, we cannot tread the same path of unbelief as did ancient Israel, refusing to be admonished and discarding the messages He has given, and escape the sure result of our course of action. (*Ms 65, 1912, par. 28*)

The Lord gave Jeremiah a message of reproof to bear to his people, charging them with the continual rejection of God's counsel: "I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto Me. (*4T* 164.2)

God pleaded with them not to provoke Him to anger with the work of their hands and their hearts, “but they hearkened not.” (4T 164.3)

In these days [today] He has instituted no new plan to preserve the purity of His people. As of old, He entreats the erring ones who profess His name to repent and turn from their evil ways. **Now, as then, by the mouth of His chosen servants He predicts the dangers before them.** He

sounds the note of warning and reproves sin just as faithfully as in the days of Jeremiah. But **the Israel of our time** have the same temptations to **scorn reproof and hate counsel** as had ancient Israel. They too often turn a deaf ear to the words that God has given His servants for the benefit of those who profess the truth. Though the Lord in mercy withholds for a time the retribution of their sin, as in the days of Jeremiah, He will not always stay His hand, but will visit iniquity with righteous judgment. (4T 165.1)

The Lord commanded Jeremiah to stand in the court of the Lord's house and speak unto all the people of Judah who came there to worship, those things which He would give him to speak, diminishing not a word, that they might hearken and turn from their evil ways. Then God would repent of the punishment which He had purposed to inflict upon them because of their wickedness. (4T 165.2)

The unwillingness of the Lord to chastise His erring people is here vividly shown. He stays His judgments; He pleads with them to return to their allegiance. He had brought them out of bondage that they might faithfully serve Him, the only true and living God; but they had wandered into idolatry, they had slighted the warnings given them by His prophets. Yet He defers His chastisement to give them one more opportunity to repent and avert the retribution for their sin. Through His chosen prophet he now sends them a clear and positive warning, and lays before them the only course by which they can escape the punishment which they deserve. This is a full repentance of their sin and a turning from the evil of their ways. (4T 165.3)

The sin of Eli was in passing lightly over the iniquity of his sons, who were occupying sacred offices. (4T 166.2)

In the days of Samuel, Israel thought that the presence of the ark containing the commandments of God would gain them the victory over the Philistines, whether or not they repented of their wicked works. (4T 166.3)

Just so, in Jeremiah's time, the Jews believed that the **strict observance** of the divinely appointed services of the temple would preserve them from the just punishment of their evil course. (Ibid.)

The same danger exists today among the people who profess to be the depositaries of God's law. They are too apt to **flatter themselves that the regard in which they hold the commandments will preserve them from the power of divine justice**. They refuse to be reprovved for evil, and charge God's servants with being too zealous in putting sin out of the camp. A sin-hating God calls upon those who profess to keep His law to depart from all iniquity. Neglect to repent and obey His word will bring as serious consequences upon God's people today as did the same sin upon ancient Israel. There is a limit beyond which He will no longer delay His judgments. The desolation of Jerusalem stands as a solemn warning before the eyes of modern Israel, that the corrections given through His chosen instruments cannot be disregarded with impunity. (4T 166.4)

The princes of Judah had heard concerning the words of Jeremiah and came up from the king's house and sat in the entry of the Lord's house. "Then spake the **priests and the prophets** unto the princes and to all the people, saying, **This man is worthy to die**; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears." (4T 166.4)

Had the prophet been intimidated by the threats of those in high authority and the clamoring of the rabble, his message would have been without effect, and he would have lost his life. But the courage with which he discharged his painful duty commanded the respect of the people and turned the princes of Israel in his favor. Thus God raised up defenders for His servant. They reasoned with the priests and false prophets, showing them how unwise would be the extreme measures which they advocated. (4T 168.1)

The influence of these powerful persons produced a reaction in the minds of the people. Then the elders united in protesting against the decision of the priests regarding the fate of Jeremiah. **They cited the case of Micah**, who prophesied judgments upon Jerusalem, saying: "Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest." They put to them the question: "Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the Lord, and besought the Lord, and the Lord repented Him of the evil which He had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls."

(4T 168.2)

So, through the pleading of Ahikam and others, the prophet Jeremiah's life was spared; although many of the priests and false prophets would have been pleased had he been put to death on the plea of **sedition**, for they could not endure the truths that he uttered exposing their wickedness. (4T 168.3)

There were false prophets, **Hananiah** was one.

Jeremiah 28:15–17

He “strengthened the unbelief of the people in Jeremiah and his message. He had wickedly declared himself to be the Lord’s messenger, and he suffered death in consequence of his fearful crime.” (4T 171.3)

There were two other false prophets, **Ahab and Zedekiah**, who prophesied lies in the name of the Lord.

Jeremiah 29:21–23

Ahab and Zedekiah . . . professed to be holy teachers; but their lives were corrupt, and they were slaves to the pleasures of sin. . . . [They] sought to thwart his [Jeremiah's] work by stirring up the people to disbelieve his words and act contrary to the counsel of God in the matter of subjecting themselves to the king of Babylon. (4T 173.2)

Other false prophets arose to **sow confusion** among the people by turning them away from obeying the divine commands given through Jeremiah, but God's judgments were pronounced against them in consequence of their grievous sin of bringing rebellion against Him. (4T 173.3)

Just such men arise in these days and breed confusion and rebellion among the people who profess to obey the law of God. . . . Those who prophesy lies encourage men to look upon sin as a small matter. (*4T* 173.4; published 1885 but written around 1881)

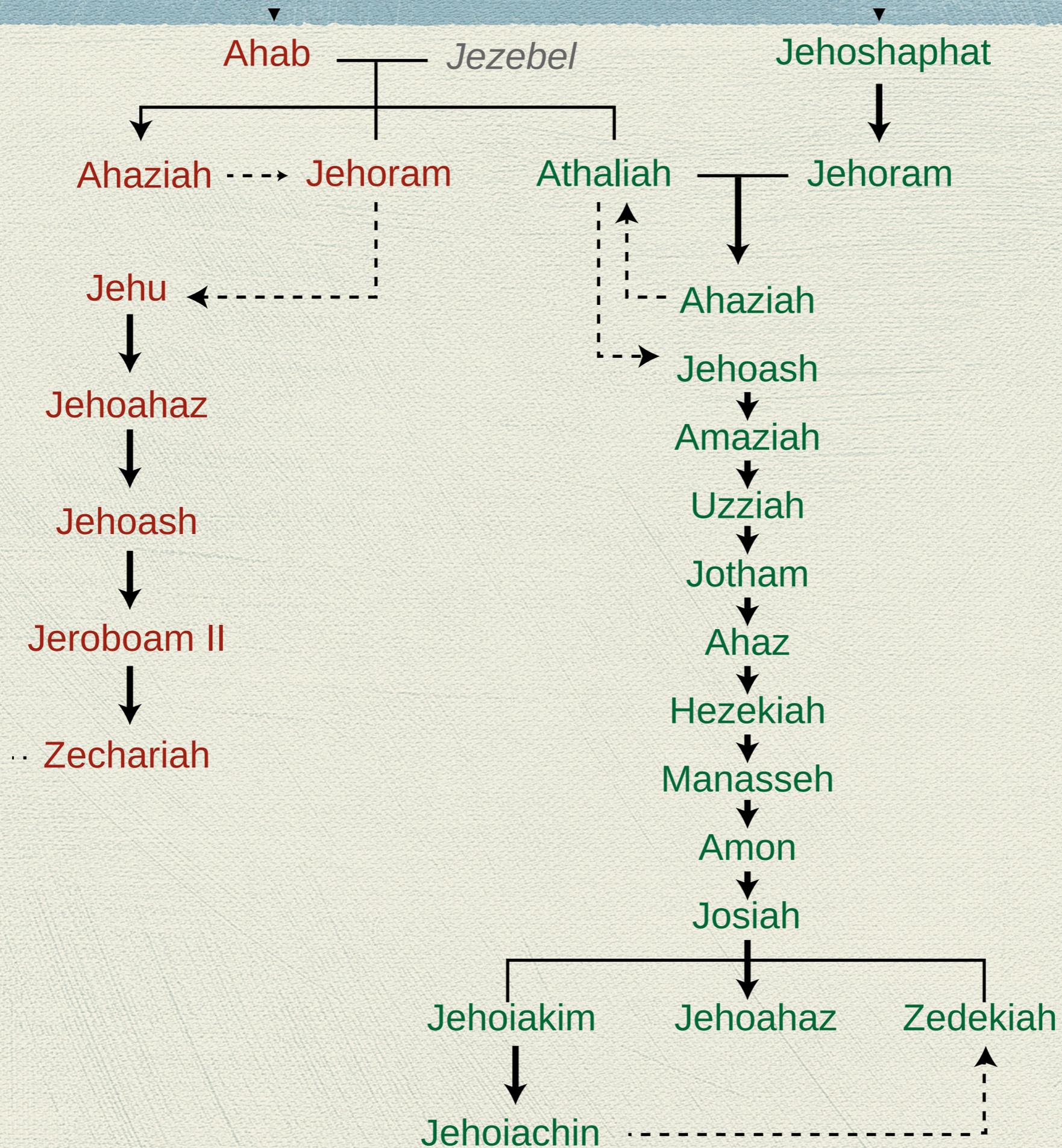
Those who pursue a course of rebellion against the Lord can always find false prophets who will justify them in their acts and flatter them to their destruction. Lying words often make many friends, as in the case of Ahab and Zedekiah. These false prophets, in their pretended zeal for God, found many more believers and followers than the true prophet, who delivered the simple message of the Lord. (4T 174.1)

God does not send judgments upon His people without first warning them to repent. He uses every means to bring them back to obedience and does not visit their iniquity with judgments until He has given them ample opportunity to repent. (4T 179.3)

The Lord is fitting a people for heaven. The defects of character, the stubborn will, the selfish idolatry, the indulgence of faultfinding, hatred, and contention, provoke the wrath of God and must be put away from His commandment-keeping people. (4T 180.3)

But the weakness of [King] Zedekiah was a **crime** for which he paid a fearful penalty. . . . The nation was conquered. Zedekiah was taken prisoner, and his sons were slain before his eyes. Then he was led away from Jerusalem a captive, hearing the shrieks of his wretched people and the roaring of the flames that were devouring their homes. His eyes were put out, and when he arrived at Babylon he perished miserably. (4T 184.2)

There are many false prophets in these days, to whom sin does not appear specially repulsive. They complain that the peace of the people is unnecessarily disturbed by the reproofs and warnings of God's messengers. . . . [the false prophets] lull the souls of sinners into a fatal ease by their smooth and deceitful teachings. Ancient Israel was thus charmed by the flattering messages of the corrupt priests. Their prediction of prosperity was more pleasing than the message of the true prophet, who counseled repentance and submission. (4T 185.1)



- ◆ **Josiah (640–609 BC)**: Jeremiah began his ministry in the 13th year of Josiah's reign.
- ◆ **Jehoahaz (608 BC)**: Also known as Shallum, he was Josiah's son, reigned for only three months, and was taken to Egypt.
- ◆ **Jehoiakim (608–597 BC)**: Another son of Josiah, he was a wicked king who burned the scroll of Jeremiah's prophecies.
- ◆ **Jehoiachin (597 BC)**: Son of Jehoiakim, he reigned for only three months before taken captive to Babylon.
- ◆ **Zedekiah (597–586 BC)**: The final king of Judah, whose rebellion against Babylon led to the siege and destruction of Jerusalem.