

## WEEK THIRTY-FOUR INTRODUCTION

This week's reading contains some of the most tragic events in the whole Old Testament. The oracles and prophecies give birth to reality. Jerusalem falls. Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian army conquers and destroys the city of David. The walls of the city are torn down and the temple burned. Such things were inconceivable just a few years prior. The people refused to listen to God's compassionate warnings. Not only are the temple and the walls destroyed but the Babylonians take the people into exile in Babylon. Yet, even the judgment of exile contains the promise. God would return them to the land after 70 years.

## KEY SCRIPTURE

*Rise up, God, judge the earth, for all the nations belong to you.*

—Psalm 82:8 CSB

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**What led up to the fall of Jerusalem? Were Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah good or evil kings? What did they do to hasten the collapse of Jerusalem? Consider the significance of leadership.**

**What does Johanan do in Jeremiah 41:11-18? How did the rescued people join the mission? Can you see any parallels to Jesus' kingdom?**

**Psalm 82 presents God as the judge over all. How is God's judgment a comfort to His afflicted people? What is His judgment against "the gods" in Psalm 82? "The gods" could refer to earthly rulers.**

Jeremiah 46-51 records God's words of judgment against the nations. Read Psalm 2. How does God's salvation arise through judgment? This is seen in Jeremiah 46:27-28. How does the idea of salvation through judgment foreshadow the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Jeremiah 50 focuses on God's word to Babylon. Bel and Marduk in verse 2 are the chief gods of Babylon. How then is the conflict a *spiritual* one where the Lord contends with and defeats the false idols of Babylon? The Lord is King.

What change happens in the peoples of Israel and Judah in Jeremiah 50:4-5? What did God use to bring about their change of heart?

By what means will the Lord defeat Babylon? See Jeremiah 51:11.

How is the Lord compared to the idols of the nations in Jeremiah 51:17-19? How is He different? How does He stand distinct from the idols and worldviews of the world today?

**BE A DOER OF THE WORD**

“So Jehoiachin changed his prison clothes, and he dined regularly in the presence of the king of Babylon for the rest of his life.” -**Jeremiah 52:33 CSB**

**Have you ever thought of your life as time away from home? How can you “dress yourself” for your true home, the presence of God in the New Heavens and the New Earth? What type of attitude would reflect that great future? What type of life would showcase the hope ahead?**