

Prophets Proclaim God's Lasting Love

Keep these ideas in mind as you study *Chapter 23*.

❖ When God first called him, the prophet Jeremiah thought he was too young. Being a prophet was difficult and dangerous. But God gave Jeremiah strength.

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❖ At the time of Jeremiah's call, Josiah was king of Judah. He was a good and faithful king. Under Josiah's leadership, the people renewed their promise to obey God. But the people had not truly accepted God into their hearts. When Josiah died, they returned to their unfaithful ways.

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❖ Jeremiah warned that if the people did not stop doing evil, the Temple would be destroyed and Jerusalem would be burned to the ground. The people did not believe Jeremiah. They thought that God would not let an enemy conquer them as long as they prayed at the Temple. Though they did not believe Jeremiah, the people were not pleased with his message. They beat Jeremiah and had him arrested, but he remained firm.

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❖ After the people were conquered by the Babylonians, Jeremiah warned them that things would get worse if they rebelled. Again, no one listened to him. They threw him into a well to keep him quiet. When the Babylonians attacked again, the Israelites lost the Temple and all their wealth. Everything that Jeremiah had told them came to pass.

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❖ The prophet that God called in Babylon was a priest named Ezekiel. He preached to the first exiles. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel warned that Jerusalem would be destroyed, but the people did not believe him. The people believed that because they were God's Chosen People, God would deliver them from the Babylonians.

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❖ From 587 until 537 B.C., the Israelites were without a homeland. This period is known as the Exile. The second group of exiles arrived in Babylon and told the first group that Jerusalem and the Temple had been destroyed. Upon hearing this, Ezekiel began to preach messages of hope. He said a new Israel would be raised up.

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❖ During the Exile, the people no longer had a Temple, so they gathered in synagogues. Synagogues were places where the people could study and worship. Today, the Jewish people still meet in synagogues to worship. The remnant was in exile for 50 years. When they returned home, they rebuilt the Temple. After they returned home, the remnant became known as Jews.

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