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⁶And the LORD God of their fathers sent *warnings* to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending *them*, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. ¹⁶But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till *there was* no remedy.

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1. Warnings unheeded

- a. God showed great longsuffering in dealing with Judah
 - a1. They were His people & He loved them
 - a2. He sent warnings & chastisement
- b. God sent messengers & prophets to warn Judah
- c. God sent Israel away, which was a warning
- d. God did not want to destroy His people
- e. Judah mocked the prophets & despised the words of the prophets
- f. God had no choice but to send judgment on Judah
 - a1. Judah provoked God to anger
 - a2. There was no more choice left, but exile
- g. Pv. 29:1 there comes a point where repentance is impossible due to hardness of heart (beyond remedy)

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¹⁷Therefore He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave *them* all into his hand. ¹⁸And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders, all *these* he took to Babylon. ¹⁹Then they burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions. ²⁰And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

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2. Babylonian brutality

- a. 2 Kings 24-25 Neb. had taken an oath of loyalty from Zedekiah, but in 588 BC, he rebelled, believing that Pharaoh Hophri would protect him
- b. When Egypt withdrew from the battle, Neb. took his vengeance out on Jerusalem (586 BC – starved out)
- c. 2 Kn. 25 describes the extent of the damage: Neb. spared no one from the sword, strong, weak, old...
- d. He took all vessels from the temple

- a1. Even the brass pillars, Boaz & Jabin, were cut up & the brass taken back to Babylon
- a2. The temple was burned & the walls destroyed
- e. Zedekiah was told that he would be taken to Babylon, but not see it (Jer. 21 & 37-38)
 - a1. Zedekiah tried to escape via the garden gate
 - a2. Babylon caught him making Zed. watch as his sons were executed & then his eyes were pierced
- f. Neb. left the poor of the land & took the left over elite captive to serve him as slaves
- g. Gedaliah, son of Shaphan, was made governor of Judah
 - a1. Gedaliah ignored warnings that the Ammonite king was sending Ishmael to assassinate him
 - a2. Ishmael killed Gedaliah & fled to Ammon
- h. Against the advice of Jeremiah, the Jews fled to Egypt & took Jeremiah with them
- i. Neb. catches up to Jews at Taphanes in NE Egypt, holding court there & executing the renegades
- j. The exile was determined to be 70 years (the Sabbath rest the land had not had under 490 years of the kings)

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²²Now 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, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also *put it* in writing, saying, ²³Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who *is* among you of all His people? May the LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up!

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3. Return from the exile

- a. After 70 years, the Persian king Cyrus, sent out a decree that the Jews could return to Jerusalem & rebuild the temple (536 BC) as prophesied by Isaiah (Is. 44:24-28)
 - a1. Other nations were sent back to their lands
 - a2. Daniel inquired about the end of the exile (Dan. 9-10) & marveled that only a remnant returned
- b. Haggai chastised the people for not rebuilding the temple right away (not rededicated until 515 BC)
- c. After the exile, Judah exchanged idolatry for legalism
 - a1. The Pharisees, Sadducees, & synagogues arise
 - a2. After the Persian period, the Greeks & Romans rule Judah, with an interlude under Maccabees