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Preface - His Grace Bishop Moussa

Our beloved Deacon Ehab has made us accustomed to have a well researched and presented Bible studies, and especially in the Second Canonical books, which are not usually visited in our general Bible studies or our meetings, even though it is repeated so many times in the Church's readings.

HE HAS PRESENTED TO US THE BOOK OF Tobit, the book of Judith, the book of Continuation of Daniel, and here he is presenting to us an excellent and deep study into the book of Baruch.

He gave us in this study an in-depth of:

The author of the book and his relationship with Jeremiah.

The authenticity of the book from the sayings of the fathers (Patrology), and references from the New Testament.

Sections of the book, the introduction, a historical view, a call for repentance and wisdom, the prophet's sayings on incarnation and the trinity ... the epistle of Jeremiah by the hand of Baruch to the Jews telling them about the exile to come, and how it is going to continue for seven generations.

Meditations on the book:

Chapter one: repentance with other important explanations and maps, and who repentance involve tears and prayer and fasting.

Chapter 2: Justice and condemnation of injustice and being harsh hearted.

Chapter 3: wisdom and Jesus Christ is the source of wisdom.

Chapter 4: punishment for edification, for they offered to Satan, and that is why the Lord allowed for their exile by a notorious enemy.

Chapter 5: salvation, for the Lord will free them in joy and in the light of His glory and out of His merciful justice.

Chapter 6: the letter of Jeremiah and that was directed from Jeremiah to the Jews, to be prepared for exile because of their sins, and to let them know that the exile will last for seven generations. And this is exactly what happened.

This is truly an excellent study with a great toil, as you will find out from reading it, as you get to know the meaning of names, and maps, and without deviating form the spiritual and Christian meaning, which the relationship of Our Lord with the book and His relationships with us.

I am really pleased with the efforts of Ehab and I request from him to continue this kind of studies for the benefit of the beloved readers, and in particular the young Coptic youth, as he plans to have it in English for them here in the land of immigration.

May the Lord bless every work for the glory of His Name, by the prayers of our beloved Shepard and the giver of our contemporary revival His Holiness Pope Shenouda the Third.

The Grace of the Lord be with you.

Anba Moussa

The general Bishop of the Youth.

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Introduction – Reverend Hegomen Father Marcos Khela

The words that I speak to you are spirit, and life. (John 6:63).

This is how Our Lord Jesus has explained his words and the Gospel, and this is how he should us the importance of the Holy Bible, for it tells us and commands us and teaches us for indeed it is a spirit and life. Blessed is the man who hides his words in his heart and in his memory in order not to sin so that the words of God become light unto my path and all his ways.

Here my beloved reader we meet again with an excellent new series, form the blessed and enjoyable series which our beloved brother and theological deacon Ehab Raif Wahib has started, for he has produced the book of Tobit, and the book of Judith and the completions of Daniel and here he is in continuous research in the second canonical books produce to us the book of Baruch, an effort that relay deserve its appreciation, for the research was in precision of words, in consistency and ease, in abundance of information and spirituality in depth and true historical sequence, which made the whole book a sweet pure delicious fruit.

This which the researcher looks at and wait for, and the reader delight in it to live in great love to the Holy Bible with the two testaments.

The loving Lord bless the work and the service of this blessed and beloved brother to work and work in continues struggle and faithful search. May this book and many of what has been produced and will be produced be a blessing in the life of many by the prayer and pleadings of the whole pure and mother of true light, holy virgin St Mary, and the prince of Martyrs St George the patron of our Church, and through the prayers of the one sitting on the throne of Saint Mark the father of fathers and shepard of shepards and the universal teacher His Holiness Pope Shenouda the third and his partner in the apostolic ministry His Grace bishop Mossa, bishop of youth.

The loving Lord preserves their lives for us

3rd of Baounah 10 of June

Departure of Anba Abrram Bishop of Faioum and Giza

Reverend Hegomen Father Marcos Khela

Servant of the Alter of the Prince of Martyrs St George

Sydney - Australia.

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Words of Thank you

In the name of the Holy Trinity.

I thank the Lord from the depth of my heart that He gave me the chance my beloved reader to meet again with you for the fourth time, for after the edition of Tobit has run our and we reprinted it for the second time and the completions of the book Judith and the completions of Daniel, we present to you the fourth book the prophecy of Baruch. I thank the Lord that he gave me grace and guidance to finish the research into the book of Baruch. I thank the Lord who gave me to finish the book that is between your hands and I ask Him to give strength to blessings to finish the rest of the second canonical books, so that I might be belittled and say I have offered something small to my mother the Coptic orthodox Church, that which gives us without limits and this might be a small return form what we have taken.

I thank the Lord for giving me my second son Athansious Jeremiah and it is known that Jeremiah the prophet was the one who dictated Baruch what to write.

I would like to thank my dear wife Eman which is still struggling at all time to give the time and the serenity to research and read, and thank Emad Ghaly who revised the work and typed it and His Grace Bishop Moussa who encouraged me, with Rev Fr Marcos Khela and Mr Karam Adel and Dr Magdy Anouar for revising the Arabic language, may the Lord reward everyone with the heavenly reward in place of the earthly and reward them all goodness for the labor of love.

May the Lord bless you all for if it was not for your support and encouragement and love I would have probably stopped at the first book. May the Lord make this book a cause of blessing to you and myself by the prayers of St Mary and the St George the Roman and St Mosses the Black and Baruch the Prophet and Jeremiah the prophet and by the prayers of His Holiness Pope Shenouda the Third and his partner in the apostolic ministry his grace bishop Moussa.

Remember me in your prayers.
Ehab Raif Wahib.

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In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, One God Amen.

Introduction

This book is known by the book of Baruch but because it is the only book in the second canonical books which has been formatted in a similar way to that which is in the Old Testament, especially the books of Jeremiah and Daniel, that it why it was called the prophecy of Baruch in the Hebrew translations. It is an excellent and fascinating book full of prophecies about Our Lord Jesus and the most famous prophecy which prove the incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ and it was used by St Athanasious the apostolic in answering the Arian heresy (Baruch 3:36,37).

In it you find guidance to the soul to repent and how the man who runs away from God, the love of God does not depart form him but rather work to punish and edify and work on purifying him to come back to the open arms of the Lord. When we did not hear he did not leave us to our sins and here we find ourselves alone because of our sins, but after repentance and self repression; life changes and our state changes and we go back to Him and He come back to us, and we feel the warms of His Hands.

In it we see how the Lord work of warning us so many times form false Gods that harm and does not benefit, these Gods are not necessarily idols but could be love of money, or lust of the flesh or TV addiction or anything that hinders you from connecting to the Lord. In it we also find excellent teachings of prayer for the leaders and the kings and all those who are in responsible position.

May the Lord make this book a source of blessing for all of those who read it, by the blessing of Baruch the prophet and the blessing of the mother of God St Mary and the great St George and the prayers of our father the honored pope Shenouda the Third and his partner in the apostolic ministry his grace bishop Moussa the general bishop.

Remember me in your prayers.

The author.

FIRST CHAPTER

Firstly: People By The Name Of Baruch

Secondly: The Author Of The Book

Thirdly: The Language In Which The Book Was Written

Fourthly: The Place In Which It Was Written.

Fifthly: When Is It Read In Our Coptic Church

Sixthly: Its Place In The Holy Bible.

Firstly: People by the name of Baruch:

Baruch is a Hebrew word which means blessed, and in Coptic it is Makari, and the word was mentioned in the holy Bible as names for three people, one of them was Baruch the author of the book and whom we are studying in this book.

The first: is Baruch the son of Zabbai that was mentioned in the book of Nehemiah, who rebuilt part of the wall of Jerusalem "*After him Baruch the son of Zabbai carefully repaired the other section, from the buttress to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. (Nehemiah 3:20).*

Baruch was one of the elders of the people and the Levites and priests that were sealed in the covenant that was made by all the people as one man to abide in the commandment. '6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch "(Nehemiah 10:6).

The second: is Baruch son of Khalhosa, or the son of Maaseiah that which was one of the elders of the people that returned with the lots to the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem. " 5 and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shiloni. " (Nehemiah 11:5).

The third: is Baruch the son of Neraiah, son of Mahseiah, son of Zedekiah, son of Hasadiah, son of Hilkiah.

Secondly: the author of the book:

The author of the book is Baruch the son of Neraiah, son of Mahseiah, son of Zedekiah, son of Hasadiah, son of Hilkiah.. the book was written in Babylon after exile. This was in the fifth year and seventh month when the Chaldaens took Jerusalem and burnt it. Baruch used to work with Jeremiah the prophet. *12 and I gave the purchase deed to Baruch the son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses who signed the purchase deed, before all the Jews who sat in the court of the prison. (Jeremiah 32:12).*

He wrote his prophecy *4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote on a scroll of a book, at the instruction of Jeremiah, all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him. 5 And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, "I am confined, I cannot go into the house of the LORD. 6 You go, therefore, and read from the scroll which you have written at my instruction, the words of the LORD, in the hearing of the people in the LORD's house on the day of fasting. And you shall also read them in the hearing of all Judah who come from their cities. 7 It may be that they will present their supplication before the LORD, and everyone will turn from his evil way. For great is the anger and the fury that the LORD has pronounced against this people." 8 And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading from the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house. (Jeremiah 36:4-8).*

32 Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the instruction of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And besides, there were added to them many similar words. (Jeremiah 36:32).

He is his faithful disciple: 10 Then Baruch read from the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court at the entry of the New Gate of the LORD's house, in the hearing of all the people.(Jeremiah 36:10).

He was from a noble family: The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And Seraiah **was** the quartermaster. (Jeremiah 51:59).

As Yousiuofious mentions he was a man of great capabilities and he was capable of reaching into high status and he knew that, but forsook this ambition because of Jeremiah's advice. *And do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek **them**; for behold, I will bring adversity on all flesh," says the LORD. "But I will give your life to you as a prize in all places, wherever you go."* (Jeremiah 45:5).

Baruch was the faithful friend to Jeremiah the prophet.



A picture of Baruch and Jeremiah next to him.

The book was named after him, because he wrote the first five chapters, and the sixth chapter is the letter of Jeremiah, for Jeremiah the prophet wrote a letter to the Jews who were about to be taken by the king of Babylon to exile in Babylon.

Baruch the author of the book used to work as scrip for Jeremiah, and he wrote what Jeremiah used to dictate to him. He was faithful to Jeremiah and was a close friend to him, and they both toiled and struggled and was persecuted together by Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

The holy Bible tells us a lot about Baruch. For when Jeremiah was in prison after he bought the field of his uncle Hanamel the son of Shallum that was in Anathoth, he took the deed of purchase and entrusted Baruch to keep it.

And Jeremiah said, "The word of the LORD came to me, saying, 7 "Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle will come to you, saying, "Buy my field which is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is yours to buy it." 8 Then Hanamel my uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said to me, "Please buy my field that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin; for the right of inheritance is yours, and the redemption yours; buy it for yourself.' Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD. 9 So I bought the field from Hanamel, the son of my uncle who was in Anathoth, and weighed out to him the money--seventeen shekels of silver. 10 And I signed the deed and sealed it, took witnesses, and weighed the money on the scales. 11 So I took the purchase deed, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open; 12 and I gave the purchase deed to Baruch the son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses who signed the purchase deed, before all the Jews who sat in the court of the prison. (Jeremiah 32:6-12).

For Jeremiah entrusted Baruch to keep all his documents. Again when Jeremiah was in the prison he called for Baruch and dictated what God has inspired Him to write in the prophecy and he wrote on the deck with ink. Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote on a scroll of a book, at the instruction of Jeremiah, all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him.(Jeremiah 36:4).

By the order of Jeremiah Baruch read the book in the hearing of all the people in the house of the Lord in the great day of fasting. You go, therefore, and read from the scroll which you have written at my instruction, the words of the LORD, in the hearing of the people in the LORD's house on the day of fasting. And you shall also read them in the hearing of all Judah who come from their cities. (Jeremiah 36:6).

As he also read it in the hearing of those who dwelled in Judah as requested by them. Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, to Baruch, saying, "Take in your hand the scroll from which you have read in the hearing of the people, and come." So Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and came to them. 15 And they said to him, "Sit down now, and read it in our hearing." So Baruch read it in their hearing. (Jeremiah 36:14,15).

When they heard the words they became so scared and they asked Baruch to escape and take Jeremiah with him and hide from the face of Jehoiakim. 19 Then the princes said to Baruch, "Go and hide, you and Jeremiah; and let no one know where you are."(Jeremiah 36:19).

It happened that when the king heard what was written in the book that he got extremely angry that he took the book and through it in the fire. 22 Now the king was sitting in the winter house in the ninth month, with a fire burning on the hearth before him. 23 And it happened, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, that the king cut it with the scribe's knife and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth. (Jeremiah 36:22, 23).

The King asked to capture Baruch the scrip and Jeremiah the prophet, but the Lord Hide them and they did not find them. Jeremiah was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write again, so he took another scroll and dictated the book again to Baruch : Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the instruction of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And besides, there were added to them many similar words. (Jeremiah 36:32).

The Bible tells us that the people of Judah did not hear to the words of the Lord on the mouth of Jeremiah regarding the stay in the land of Judah and not going to Egypt, for they resisted him and Baruch, and took them by force with the rest of the people of Judah and the daughters of the king to the Land of Egypt at the city of Tahpanhes.

Now it happened, when Jeremiah had stopped speaking to all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, all these words,

2 that Azariah the son of Hoshaiiah, Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men spoke, saying to Jeremiah, "You speak falsely! The LORD our God has not sent you to say, "Do not go to Egypt to dwell there." 3 But Baruch the son of Neriah has set you against us, to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they may put us to death or carry us away captive to Babylon." 4 So Johanan the son of Kareah, all the captains of the forces, and all the people would not obey the voice of the LORD, to remain in the land

of Judah. 5 But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces took all the remnant of Judah who had returned to dwell in the land of Judah, from all nations where they had been driven-- 6 men, women, children, the king's daughters, and every person whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah. 7 So they went to the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the LORD. And they went as far as Tahpanhes. (Jeremiah 43:1-7).

His departure:

There are a lot of postulations about his departure, for it is not known exactly when he departed, for where he was buried, for some of the old Jewish Traditions that says:

1 when Baruch was in Babylon, when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Khafraa the pharaoh of Egypt, he took Baruch and Jeremiah to become teachers to Ezra, while Ezra refused departing from Judah to go to Babylon till the death of His Teacher Baruch, and this is the most accepted opinion.

Another says that when Baruch came back from Jerusalem carrying the book, he stayed among the rebels of Jerusalem till his departure.

Jereom believes that he died in Egypt.

The character of Baruch had a great role in the life of Jeremiah and his service, which made so many of the generations that, came after to mention him and to write a lot of books about him.

1. The revelation of Baruch
2. The book of Baruch
3. The completion of the sayings of Baruch.
4. The Gnostic book of Baruch
5. The book of Baruch written in Latin.
6. The book of Baruch written in Greek and goes back to the second century.
7. Another book of Baruch that goes back to the fourth and fifth century.

Thirdly: the language in which the book was written:

The book of Baruch was originally written in Hebrew and was considered as an integral part of the book of Jeremiah. The book was in circulation in Hebrew, and this was the case till the second century when Theodosius translated it to Greek. The Hebrew version has somehow disappeared.

Fourthly: the time in which it was written.

The book was written in Babylon after exile, and that was in the fifth year in the seventh month when the Chaldeans took Jerusalem and burnt it. It is more probable that the first part of the book (chapter 1:15 - 3:8) was written in the second century before Christ, but some believe it goes back to the Persian era.

Fifthly: when do we read it in our Coptic Orthodox Church.

The book is read in the feast of epiphany, where there has been prophecies about the incarnation (Baruch 3:36 - 4:4). (The deacon service book).

A part of the prayer of Baruch is read in the praises of the Joyous Saturday (the night of Apocalypse) (The deacon service book).

Sixthly: where is its place in the Holy Bible:

It comes after the Lamentations of Jeremiah and is appreciated by (Ba) and there are six chapters and 213 verses.

SECOND CHAPTER

Firstly: The Authenticity Of The Book
Secondly: The Sections Of The Book.

Firstly: the authenticity of the book.

All the Orthodox and Catholic Churches declare and confirm the authenticity of the book of Baruch, but the Protestant deny that Baruch was the author of the book, and they declare that the letter of Jeremiah was an independent book on its own in the translation by the seventy elders.

The author of (the guidance of the seekers of the Holy Bible - Beirut edition- 1937 page 306) who is a protestant says that the book of Baruch is a collection of additions that is not authentic. we do not accept this statement for the one who reads the chapters and verses in the book of Jeremiah that talked about Baruch, would be gripped by the fact that Baruch was not only a scrip for Jeremiah but he was a prophet also. For the author mentioned above, paradoxically says in his book (that even thought these additions are not authentic and correct historically but it has a great level of holiness and a great zeal feed by the Spirit that dwelt in the words of the Old Testament!!!)

We have mentioned before in this series of books the names and dates of the councils that was held and declared the authenticity of the second canonical books that was collected after Ezra and one of them was Baruch. We have mentioned previously that it was among the Books that was inspired, and was mentioned in the canons of the apostles and the law of Ibn Elasal. We also add that it was mentioned in the writings of St John Chrysostom (one of the forefathers of the Fourth Century) who said " as there are no questions about the book of Jeremiah, so we do for the book of Baruch, as no one should doubt the authenticity of the book as well as the rest of books that the Church has accepted to be of the same status of the rest of the books of the Holy Bible.

It has also been mentioned in the book (The refuge for the student of the book dilemma) that so many of our forefathers the saints of the first generation of Christianity have used the book of Baruch in their writings sermons and letters. St Eklemandas the Alexandrian (in the book of the educator chapter 1:10, 2:3), and also St Dionysius the Alexandrian (in his book the tenth questioner), also Pope Athanasious the apostolic (in talks against Arias the heretic), and also St Tertilian, and St Keprianos, St Ousabious, St Cyril of Jerusalem, St Basil, and St John Chrysostom have all mentioned the book of Baruch in their writings.

Looking into the writings of the fathers of the council of Nicea and before the council of Nicea and post Nicean fathers, we will discover what was mentioned about the book of Baruch, to prove how the fathers of the Church have confirmed the book of Baruch, before the split, so how do the protestant deny the book after the split?

St John Chrysostom says:

As there are no questions about the book of Jeremiah, so we do for the book of Baruch, as no one should doubt the authenticity of the book as well as the rest of books that the Church has accepted, but rather we have to give it the same status as the rest of the books of the Holy Bible.

St Athanasios have also used the book of Baruch, with one of the verses in his second article against Arias, and also in his first article about the Lord Jesus Christ. [37] Afterward he appeared upon earth and lived among men. (Baruch 3:38).

The sayings of the fathers of Nicea:

St Athanasios used the book of Baruch in answering Arias in defending the divinity of the Son saying: as you have heard what Moses and Isaiah the prophet have said about the son, hear also what Jeremiah have said in regards to the truth: **[35] This is our God; no other can be compared to him! [36] He found the whole way to knowledge, and gave her to Jacob his servant**

And to Israel whom he loved. [37] Afterward he appeared upon earth and lived among men. (Baruch 3:35-37).

He also used the words of Jeremiah the prophet from the book of Baruch, "Jeremiah was a prophet inspired from God, as he knew that God the eternal, the only begotten son of God is one in nature with God the Father and these are his words: **This is our God; no other can be compared to him! (Baruch 3:35)**".

St Athanasios also used the book of Baruch in saying: "In the Old Testament there are twenty two books complete in numbers that have been handed among the Jews from generation to generation, and these are : Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, after these there are the book of Kings, and these are First Kings, and Second Kings counted as one book ; Third and Fourth Kings counted as one book, also there is First and Second Chronicles counted as one book. First and Second Ezra counted as one book, then the book of Isaiah, the book of Jeremiah, the Revelation of Baruch and the letter in one book, then the book of Ezekiel and Daniel. All of which form the Old Testament.

Also from the sayings of the forefathers "Don't you know that the one who was found from the Father and after that became Man is God Himself? So let us hear what the prophet has said: This is our God; no other can be compared to him! [36] He found the whole way to knowledge, and gave her to Jacob his servant and to Israel whom he loved. [37] Afterward He appeared upon earth

and lived among men. "(Baruch 3:37) and this last verse is from the mouth of St Cyril, for many of the Greek and Latin forefathers had it as a prophecy for the incarnation. St Cyril of Jerusalem has also used the book of Baruch when he talked about the Old Testament. The council of Nicea has also used the book of Baruch in answering the heresy of Ustin, and how the book has answered lots of Heretics and in particular the heresy of Ustin.

The New Testament present to us two examples of the remarks left on the author:

1. The Lord Jesus Christ: in the faith of the Apostolic Church:

He is the incarnation of God's wisdom as St Paul the apostolic have said: *Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1 Corinthians 1:24)*. Baruch the prophet praise the wisdom that is hidden from the world, that which God has entrust Israel with it and asks: **[29] Who has gone up into heaven, and taken her, and brought her down from the clouds?(Baruch 3:29)**.

The words here are from the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ answering Baruch, given to us by St John the beloved : *13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.(John 3:13)*.

2. The prophet educates the people and says: **[7] for you provoked him who made you, by sacrificing to demons and not to God. (Baruch 4:7)**. We see St Paul repeats the same words warning the Church of Corinthians with words that carry the same meaning that was mentioned in the book of Baruch : *20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's Table and of the table of demons. 22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? (1 Corinthians 10:20-22)*.

Secondly: Sections of the Book:

The book is divided into two Parts:

Part One: this involves the first five chapters that were written by Baruch the prophet.

Part Two: the sixth and last chapter is the letter of Jeremiah

Part One:

Part one consists of two sections:

The first section:

From (chapter 1 to chapter 3:8), it includes an introduction and a historical account, as it mentions that the book was written in the fifth year of the destruction and exile of Jerusalem. Baruch has read the book in the hearing of Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all those who were in exile from the Jews in Babylon, they all lamented and fasted and repented and sent offerings of silver to Jehoiakim the high priest, the son of Hilkiah, to offer of their behave a sacrifice of sin and burnt offerings and sent the book with those offerings to be read to their people in the house of the Lord in their own nation in Jerusalem, and so to remind the people with their sins, and asking them to repent and return to God, and to pray for the King of Babylon and the air to throne .

In this section Baruch remind the people how they have sinned against God, and how they deserve His Judgments in punishing them, and how they were to fall under the hands of an idol-worshipping nation. Then again he prophesied that because of their return to God while in the land of exile, they will return to their own land and God will make an eternal covenant with them.

The second section:

From (chapter 3:9 to chapter 5), it details how the people return to God, the source of all wisdom. How they are educated, become wise and understand the ways of the Lord. How they present truthful repentance and how they seek Him and He saves them. In this section also Baruch asks them to please God and not to worship Satan. Then he promises Jerusalem that it will take off the cloth of humiliation and be dressed in righteousness. We notice in this section how Baruch talks with the Spirit of prophecy about two important believes in Christianity:

The Incarnation:

In chapter 3, he talks about the incarnation of God the word for the salvation of humanity, and that His kingdom expands on the face of the Earth. ***O Israel, how great is the house of God! And how vast the territory that he possesses!*** (Baruch 3:24). He also talks in the same prophecy about the second Hypostasis that came down from heaven and went up again. ***Who has gone up into heaven, and taken His, and brought His down from the clouds?*** (Baruch 3:29) He then confirms the truth of the incarnation ***"Afterward He appeared upon earth and lived among men."***(Baruch 3:37).

The holy trinity:

In the fourth chapter he points to this believe by saying (For I have put my hope in the Everlasting = pointing towards the Father = to save you, and joy has come to me from the Holy One = pointing towards the Holy Spirit = because of the mercy which soon will come to you from your everlasting Savior = pointing towards the Son the word, the savior of all men). (Baruch 4:22)

Part Two:

The Letter of Jeremiah is counted as the second part of the book, and it involves the letter that was sent by Jeremiah the prophet by the hands of Baruch to the Jews that were about to be taken to exile by the king of Babylon, in the prophet expose the corruption of the idol worshiping and warn them from bowing to the idols that can not speak, move, and have no spirit " ***16*** ***From this it is evident that they are not Gods; so do not fear them.*** " (Baruch 6:14). In the same letter he also prophecy that the exile will continue for ***3*** ***Therefore when you have come to Babylon you will remain there for many years, for a long time, up to seven generations;.*** "(Baruch 6:2) that is to say for seventy years "after ***that I will bring you away from there in peace***"

THIRD CHAPTER

Meditations on The Book Of Baruch

Chapter One

Repentance

[1] These are the words of the book which Baruch the son of Neraiah, son of Mahseiah, son of Zedekiah, son of Hasadiah, son of Hilkiah, wrote in Babylon, [2] in the fifth year, on the seventh day of the month, at the time when the Chaldeans took Jerusalem and burned it with fire.

Baruch: Hebrew name which means "Blessed".

Neraiah : Hebrew name which means Yahowa is a lampstand and he is the son of Mahseiah, and the father of Baruch the prophet who handed Jeremiah the deed for buying a field in front of witnesses (Jeremiah 32:12) . He was the one who recorded the words of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 36:4). Neraiah father of Seraiah was also a quartermaster and a companion for Zedekiah the king and the messenger for Jeremiah the Prophet.

59 The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And Seraiah was the quartermaster. (Jeremiah 51:59).

Mahseiah: Hebrew name which means the work of Yahowa

Hasadiah: Hebrew name which means the Lord is merciful .

Babylon: in Hebrew Bab Hal in the Assyrian Babylonian Bab Eli and Bab Elani meaning the door of God or door of Gods and was translated to Samaritan to the name of Kazanger Meaning the door of God and it is a traditional naming.

Chaldeans: They used to live in Chaldea to the south of Babylon and they were the dominant race that occupied Babylon from 721 B.C TO 539 B.C and they filled most of the higher positions of leaders and powers. They filled the position of Priesthood in the capital so that the name Chaldeans was a synonym to the priest of Marduch the God of Babylon

This was mentioned by Herodet the historian, as the people of Babylon believed that these priests had the wisdom, knowledge witchcraft, magic, sorcery and astrology (Daniel 1:4, 2:2,4).

The word Chaldeans was also used when mentioning "Ur of the Chaldeans" (Genesis 11:31). Nebuchadnezzar and Murdoch were some of the kings of Chaldeans.

Pages 15 - 26.5 are missing

Day of the feast= feast of the caves "You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, when you have gathered from your threshing floor and from your winepress." (Deuteronomy 16:13)

For the people used the caves of the trees, which was similar to that which was set in the fruit garden in the days of harvest. This used to resemble the Israel tents in the wilderness. These feasts were of the most popular traditional feasts. "Therefore all the men of Israel assembled with King Solomon at the feast in the month of Ethanim, Which is the seventh month." (1 kings 8:2).

25 "In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast, he shall do likewise for seven days, according to the sin offering, the burnt offering, the grain offering, and the oil." (Ezekiel 45:25)

These three feasts were not celebrated till after entering the promised land of Canaan.

15 "And you shall say: `Righteousness belongs to the Lord our God, but confusion of face, as at this day, to us, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, 16 and to our kings and our princes and our priests and our prophets and our fathers, 17 because we have sinned before the Lord, 18 and have disobeyed him, and have not heeded the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in the statutes of the Lord Which he set before us.

Here we see that the confession was a collective confession, of kings, priests, prophets, leaders, masters, and fathers. They all confessed that they did not abide in the ways of the Lord.

That is why in justice they have been judge, and they did not justify their sins or look for excuses but confessed that they are sinners, that is why when they asked for forgiveness the Lord answered their prayers, unlike our father Adam and Eve that looked for excuses. Some of the people in their confession with the priests look for thousands of reasons to justify their innocence, but if they did like our father David when he spoke to Nathan the prophet "So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away our sin; you shall not die. (2 Sam 12:13)

19 From the day when the Lord brought our fathers out of the land of Egypt until today, we have been disobedient to the Lord our God, and we have been negligent, in not heeding his voice. 20 So to this day there have clung to us the calamities and The curse which the Lord declared through Moses his servant at the time when he brought our fathers out of the land of Egypt to give to us a land flowing with milk and honey.

21 We did not heed the voice of the Lord our God in all the words of the prophets whom he sent to us, but we each followed the intent of his own wicked heart by serving other Gods and doing what is evil in the sight of the Lord our God.

Moses = is an Egyptian name meaning "boy" and its meaning in Hebrew is "picked".

(picture)

A picture for the life of Moses the prophet.

(picture)

The family of Moses the prophet.

Egypt = the name of Egypt in the foreign languages is derived from the word “manfies” in the old Egyptian language and that is “ ha-ko-betah”, meaning “ home- spirit-betah”. And the name Egypt in Greek is “Agyptos”. But for the old Egyptians they called their nation many different names, one of which is “Kemi” which means the black land, and they also called it the “ two lands the upper and lower Egypt” but for the name of the nation in Arabic is similar to that in Hebrew and that is “masriam” which in a way resemble the plural of the two upper and lower Egypt.

The Lord has warned His people so many times after they came out of the land of Egypt. And that is found in the book of Joshua (chapters 23,24). *16 So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other Gods; 17 for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the*

Way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed. 18 And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God." 19 But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. 20 If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign Gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good." 21 And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD!" (Joshua 24:16).

Here we can see that the sin involved the whole congregation

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, and have done abominable iniquity; There is none who does good. 2 God looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. 3 Every one of them has turned aside; They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one. (Psalm 14; 1-3, 53:1-3)

It has been over more than seven centuries since the exodus out of Egypt till the book was written and the Lord is patient with them and gave the chance, and sent Jeremiah the prophet who warned them and said, *"Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem; See now and know; and seek in her open places if you can find a man, if there is anyone who executes judgment, who seeks the truth, and I will pardon her."* (Jeremiah 5:1)

O Lord open our ears that we can hear Your voice and soften our hard solid hearts so that it become human and that we may be able to give the first place in the heart and make the door of our house open for you at all times so that when you knock on our door you find us ready and not asleep in darkness, for it is fearful to fall in the hands of the living God.

26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. . (Hebrew 10:26,27,31).

Picture

Chapter Two

Justice

[1]"So the Lord confirmed his word, which he spoke against us, and against our judges who judged Israel, and against our kings and against our princes and against the men of Israel and Judah. [2] Under the whole heaven there has not been done the like of what he has done in Jerusalem, in accordance with what is written in the Law of Moses,

Israel = the Lord gave the name Israel to our father Jacob the son of Isaac the son of Abraham after a long fight in the night at Penuel at his way to the field of Aram. For the Lord said to him " *And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."* (Genesis 32:28)

And the Lord repeated that when he blessed him at Bethel.

And God said to him, " Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob Anymore, but Israel shall be your name." So He called his name Israel. (Genesis 35:10)

The meaning of the name is "struggling with God". This name was called upon all the descendants of Jacob, which are the people of Israel.

Judah = Is a Hebrew name meaning "thanks" and he is the fourth child of Jacob from Leah and he is born in the land between the rivers, and that name was given because of the thanks giving of his mother at his birth. " *And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she Stopped bearing."* (Genesis 29:35).

The Lord has warned them and they did not listen so they deserve punishment, and the punishment was like never before as Moses has told them in (Genesis 27 and 35). It was great evil under heaven at that time that has never been seen in Jerusalem before, it was a sever siege that the humans lost their humanity and look what they did:

[3] That we should eat, one the flesh of his son and another the flesh of his daughter.

A man by nature care for his/her children as they are considered part of his/her own body, and every parent would like to see their children far better than them, but see here what sin has done?

"The hands of the compassionate women have cooked their own children; they became food for them in the destruction of the daughter of my people". (lam 4:10)

The sin make humans think of themselves and forget everything else and it was also mentioned in Elisha how some mothers slaughtered their children.

And it happened after this that Ben-Hadad king of Syria gathered all his army, and went up and besieged Samaria.²⁵ and there was a great famine in Samaria; and indeed they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove droppings for five shekels of silver ²⁶ Then, as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, "Help, my Lord, O king!"

²⁷And he said, "If the LORD does not help you, where can I find help for you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?" ²⁸ Then the king said to her, "What is troubling you?" And she answered, "This woman said to me, "Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' ²⁹ So we boiled my son, and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, "Give your son, that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son." ³⁰ Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he tore his clothes; and as he passed by on the wall, the people looked, and there underneath he had sackcloth on his body. ³¹ Then he said, "God do so to me and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today!" (2 Kings 6:24-31)

and that happened because God gave them over to a debased mind to do what was not fit.
²⁸And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; (Romans 1:28)

[4] And he gave them into subjection to all the kingdoms around us, to be a reproach and desolation among all the surrounding peoples, where the Lord has scattered them. [5] They were brought low and not raised up, because we sinned against the Lord our God, in not heeding his voice. [6] "Righteousness belongs to the Lord our God, but confusion of face to us and our fathers, as at this day.

For sin is separation from God.

²⁰Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.(2 cor 5:20

By their separation they became a disgrace among nations for the Lord is the one who defend them, but they did not want the Lord and they left him and deserved their punishment, for God is just and the got their shame and disgrace.

[7] All those calamities with which the Lord threatened us have come upon us.

[8] Yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord by turning away, each of us, from the thoughts of his wicked heart. [9] And the Lord has kept the calamities ready, and the Lord has brought them upon us, for the Lord is righteous in all his

Works, which he has commanded us to do. [10] Yet we have not obeyed his voice, to walk in the statutes of the Lord, which he set before us.

The Lord has kept the calamities ready= is a prophecy by Jeremiah the prophet

²⁷Behold, I will watch over them for adversity and not for good. And all the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, until there is an end to them. (Jeremiah 44:27)

How beautiful that in your prayers you confess your sins and ask for forgiveness from God, for sin is a confrontation with God. And bring the blame upon your self as Baruch did in his prayer. ***Yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord by turning away, each of us, from the thoughts of his wicked heart.***

Thought of the heart= this means the mind (thoughts) and it is the one that drives the feelings (heart) and both were united in evil.

[11] "And now, O Lord God of Israel, who didst bring thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and with signs and wonders and with great power and outstretched arm, and hast made thee a name, as at this day, [12] we have sinned, we have been ungodly, we have done wrong, O Lord our God, against all thy ordinances. [13] Let thy anger turn away from us, for we are left, few in number, among the nations where thou hast scattered us.

Sin can happen unintentionally, but transgression is the sin that happens with intention, that is why in the Old Testament the sacrifice for the sin was different to the sacrifice for the transgression, and the saint Baruch was asking the forgiveness for the few people who were left after exile. For the sin has brought about spiritual death, eternal death, and the physical death. As it is written in the parable of the prodigal son when he sinned: "for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." And they began to be merry." (Luke 15:24).



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طريق العودة من بابل إلى فلسطين عبر البحر الأحمر

[14] Hear, O Lord, our prayer and our supplication, and for thy own sake deliver us, and grant us favor in the sight of those who have carried us into exile;

[15] That all the earth may know that thou art the Lord our God, for Israel and his descendants are called by thy name.

Those who carried us into exile = those who captured us.

They started to ask for God's mercy and remind Him that they are His people and any insult to them is an insult to Him personally, and here Baruch remind the Lord by His promise to Moses in the book of Deuteronomy "The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. 10 Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you (Deuteronomy 28:9,10).

[16] O Lord, look down from thy holy habitation, and consider us. Incline thy ear, O Lord, and hear; [17] open thy eyes, O Lord, and see; for the dead who are in Hades, whose spirit has been taken from their bodies, will not ascribe glory or justice to the Lord, [18] but the person that is greatly distressed, that goes about bent over and feeble, and the eyes that are failing, and the person that hungers, will ascribe to thee glory and righteousness, O Lord.

Hades = this word is not mentioned in the new testament except once when the Lord spoke to Peter answering him about being the son of the living God, and that He will build the Church on the rock.

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:15-18).

It is a translation from the Greek word *hardes* which is repeated in the new testament for eleven times and it was translated in most of them to Hades and in the catholic version it was (*elgahim*) which is equal to (*shaoul*) in Arabic, which is mentioned over sixty five times in the old testament and in all it was translated to the word Hades. "Gahim" in Arabic is a strong fire, and every strong fire resembles hades, hades is the place of suffering of the evil people as we read in the parable of Lazarus and the rich man.

23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 "Then he cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." (Luke 16:23,24).

Here Baruch is bringing the Lord attention by " look, consider, incline, and open the eyes". Not that the Lord does not do; but to bring the covenant and promises to His attention.

From the characteristics of the righteous:

That goes about bent over = is the humiliated person.

The eyes that are falling = from the tears and crying over the sins.

The person that hunger = is the fasting, and self-controlled spirit.

It is interesting to note that the people who offered the prayers were from the righteous group of the people, they lived in obedience to God's commandment but hardship got to them and they did not cry, but instead they said it is because of our sins and the sins of our children that in justice we are being condemned and they gave God the glory.

[19] For it is not because of any righteous deeds of our fathers or our kings that we bring before thee our prayer for mercy, O Lord our God. [20] For thou hast sent thy anger and thy wrath upon us, as thou didst declare by thy servants the prophets, saying: [21] "Thus says the Lord: Bend your shoulders and serve the king of Babylon, and you will remain in the land which I gave to your fathers. [22] But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord and will not serve the king of Babylon,

Here Baruch is asking for mercy for the sake of the bones of the kings, and the fathers the saints, e.g. Elisha the prophet whose bones raised the dead.

21 So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet. (2 kings 13:21).

He finishes the prayer by mentioning the sin the people committed when they did not listen to Jeremiah the prophet who asked them to bend and serve the king of Babylon. And when they refused to greet the king of Babylon – which was Nebuchadnezzar – and the Lord the leader of His people does not defend them but rather use Nebuchadnezzar his slave to fulfill His will. As he is not his servant who worship Him but a tool in the hand of the Lord to set a holy war against His people.

And the punishment was:

[23] I will make to cease from the cities of Judah and from the region about Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, and the whole land will be a desolation without inhabitants."

The Lord is punishing the people, and leave them in a state of fear and destruction and takes away all the signs of living from joy, wedding, sound of mirth, and they become in a state of mourning and family loss and lack of food.

10 Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. 11 And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. (Jeremiah 25:10).

[24] "But we did not obey thy voice, to serve the king of Babylon; and thou hast confirmed thy words, which thou didst speak by thy servants the prophets, that the bones of our kings and the bones of our fathers would be brought out of their graves; [25] and behold, they have been cast out to the heat of day and the frost of night. They perished in great misery, by famine and sword and pestilence. [26] And the house which is called by thy name thou hast made as it is today, because of the wickedness of the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

To serve the king of Babylon= it was difficult for any Jewish especially the king to allow the worship of the king of Babylon; for the Lord asked them ‘*I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves; I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright*’. (Leviticus 26:13).

A worship to any king who worship the idols is a sign of God’s anger, and it was one of the curses that the people would fall under, when they break the commandment ‘*48 therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on Your neck until He has destroyed you*’. (Deuteronomy 28:48).

So the Lord asked them to worship the king of Babylon for as their humiliation to the king they will discover their sins, for by the physical humiliation and their exile from their land, the holy city and the holy temple they may know how the sin can exile humanity from God. *6 And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to*

Serve him. 7 So all nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son, until the time of his land comes; and then many nations and great kings shall make him serve them. 8 And it shall be, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and which will not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation I will punish,' says the LORD, "with the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. 9 Therefore do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who speak to you, saying, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon." 10 For they prophesy a lie to you, to remove you far from your land; and I will drive you out, and you will perish. 11 But the nations that bring their necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let them remain in their own land,' says the LORD, "and they shall till it and dwell in it."'"

Everyone was happy after building the temple and finding the book of law, as they were proud of the literal meaning of the covenant, but they did not care about it spiritually as they worshiped the idols, not because their enemy forced them to do so, and because they were ignorant, but because they loved the idols and followed and worshiped the idols and asked its help, and the punishment of those who worshiped the idols comes after their death, so what will happen to them / their bones will rise up after their death to be under the sun, and the moon, and the heavenly powers, so that they are in shame and humiliation even after their death. All of them have sinned so the insult will be upon all of them after their death.

They have chosen the dead idols over the living God, so that is why death came upon them and shame even after their death.

[27] "Yet thou hast dealt with us, O Lord our God, in all thy kindness and in all thy great compassion, [28] as thou didst speak by thy servant Moses on the day when thou didst command him to write thy law in the presence of the people of Israel, saying, [29] "If you will not obey my voice, this very great multitude will surely turn into a small number among the nations, where I will scatter them.

We notice here that he started in hope as he talked about the covenant that was between God and man, as He said to Moses *"9 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 10 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Deuteronomy 5:9,10).*

"Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His Commandments; 10 and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face. (Deuteronomy 7:9,10).

This is what happened as the Lord had warned them *if* they worship another God that they will become small number of nations and that is due to the many being slaughtered in exile.



صورة دوسون حاتم ليرحموا الشريعة

[30] For I know that they will not obey me, for they are a stiff-necked people. But in the land of their exile they will come to themselves, [31] and they will know that I am the Lord their God. I will give them a heart that obeys and ears that hear; [32] and they will praise me in the land of their exile, and will remember my name,

*Stiff-necked= harsh hearted = its translation in the New Testament is stiff-necked.
51 "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. (Acts 7:51).*

They will come to themselves = coming back to God.

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9,10).

Humans look to the eyes but the Lord looks to the heart. 7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused Him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (I Samuel 16:7).

I will give them a heart that obeys and ears that hear = the Lord is the giver, though man is still in evil and sin, but God is the one who opens the ears and changes the hard hearts to human hearts, and says to us as He did in the new testament '9 And He said to them, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Mark 4:9).

16 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Mark 7:16).

So after the heart is changed and the ears are opened not to sin and evil but to spiritual talk, our talk becomes praises to God even in a foreign land in which you will be killed for not worshipping idols.

[33] and will turn from their stubbornness and their wicked deeds; for they will remember the ways of their fathers, who sinned before the Lord

[34] I will bring them again into the land which I swore to give to their fathers, to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob, and they will rule over it; and I will increase them, and they will not be diminished. [35] I will make an everlasting covenant with them to be their God and they shall be my people; and I will never again remove my people Israel from the land which I have given them."

Abraham = means father of many.

Isaac = means in Hebrew "to laugh".

Jacob = a Hebrew name which means "to follow" or "to catch the heel".

Stiff-necked is a sign of harshness in the heart, and when the Lord puts a human heart in them, they will repent from being stiff-necked. Sin is the one that makes man stiff-necked, but the point of repentance the Lord has changed their hearts, opened their ears, blessed their numbers, and gave them His fatherhood by becoming their God. He returned them to His son-ship by having them as His people, and protecting them from enemies, and making them inherit the land which He had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. (Jeremiah 31:33).

Some people see that the Lord has made many promises with man, which were all fulfilled by the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross.

1-The covenant with Adam: in which man will be blessed with the paradise of delight and all its fruits. But Adam rejected the covenant and was kicked out of paradise, as it is written in the book of " *But like men they transgressed the covenant; There they dealt treacherously with Me. (Hosea 6:7).*

2- The covenant with Noah = it was regarding the new land after the flood as the Lord blessed Noah and his people. *So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. (Genesis 9:1).*

28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:28).

And the covenant was set on blood, the blood of the sacrifice.

3- The covenant with Abraham: the promise was linked to circumcision
and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.(genesis 17:11).

4- The covenant with Moses: it was based on the offerings 9 "*The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments*

of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.(Deuteronomy 28:9).

That is why we need to ask were is our promise that we have with Him at the beginning of the year, it is our fault that we change our promises and reject the covenant; may the Lord bless you all and strengthen you to fulfill your promises, in order to take the blessing of setting with Him and enjoying His promises.



Chapter Three

Wisdom

[1] "O Lord Almighty, God of Israel, the soul in anguish and the wearied spirit cry out to thee. [2] Hear, O Lord, and have mercy, for we have sinned before thee. [3] For thou art enthroned forever, and we are perishing forever.

The soul in anguish= is the soul that is in sadness from the troubles.

Here the hearts are talking to the God the almighty in mercy, for He is merciful and ask for Him to hear, and have mercy on them after they had sinned against Him, for the wage of sin is death, for if the Lord did not forgive them and had mercy on them they will perish.

[4] O Lord Almighty, God of Israel, hear now the prayer of the dead of Israel and of the sons of those who sinned before thee, who did not heed the voice of the Lord their God, so that calamities have clung to us. [5] Remember not the iniquities of our fathers, but in this crisis remember thy power and thy name. [6] For thou art the Lord our God, and thee, O Lord, will we praise.

Here the prayer is for the mercy and acceptance of the prayer of the people of Israel.

Dead of Israel = they are the one who are almost dead by their sins. They confessed that their fathers sinned against the Lord and ask Him to forgive their fathers sins, that they have committed against the Lord, they also remember that he is their God and they will continue in parsing Him no matter what happens.

We notice that in the verses (3:1-6) is a cry and praise to God from those who are stressed in exile, those who sinned and their fathers sinned, but returned from exile by their heart, so that the Lord may have mercy on them and remember His promises with them.

[7] For thou hast put the fear of thee in our hearts in order that we should call upon thy name; and we will praise thee in our exile, for we have put away from our hearts all the iniquity of our fathers who sinned before thee. [8] Behold, we are today in our exile where thou hast scattered us, to be reproached and cursed and punished for all the iniquities of our fathers who forsook the Lord our God."

Put away = rejected.

We have put away from our hearts all the iniquity of our fathers "7 *Our fathers sinned and are no more, But we bear their iniquities.*" (*Lamentations 5:7*). We notice that so many times these days that the children born with illnesses or deformities, because of sins that the parents have committed, eg. those who are drug addicts, or smokers during pregnancy, and unfortunately the children pay the price.

[9] Hear the commandments of life, O Israel; give ear, and learn wisdom!

[10] Why is it, O Israel, why is it that you are in the land of your enemies,

that you are growing old in a foreign country, that you are defiled with the dead,

[11] That you are counted among those in Hades? Baruch [12] You have forsaken the fountain of wisdom. [13] If you had walked in the way of God, you would be dwelling in peace for ever. [14] Learn where there is wisdom, where there is strength, where

there is understanding, that you may at the same time discern where there is length of days, and life, where there is light for the eyes, and peace.

Learn wisdom = means to have knowledge.

El gahim = hades.

Fountain of wisdom = is God's commandment or is God Himself.

13 " For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns--broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:13).

The subject here is wisdom (Sophia), which is a Greek word which means wisdom. Here Baruch mentions an important fact, which is no matter how man reach from richness and power, without God there is no peace. You have forsaken the fountain of wisdom. if you had walked in the way of God, you would be dwelling in peace for ever. (Baruch 3:12,13).

Here Baruch asks a question when he talks about the importance of wisdom: *Why is it, O Israel, why is it that you are in the land of your enemies? (Baruch 3:10).*

He answers: because you have forsaken the fountain of wisdom (Baruch 3:12). Wisdom is God's commandment, and man has to abide in God's word to attain His wisdom, as it is written in the book of proverbs: "For length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man." (Proverbs 3:2-4).

Here Baruch asks another question: "*where there is strength, where there is understanding, that you may at the same time discern where there is length of days, and life?*" (Baruch 3:14).

And he answers him and says: *'She is the book of the commandments of God, and the law that endures for ever. All who hold her fast will live, and those who forsake her will die.'* (Baruch 4:1).

And Baruch is still wondering about attaining wisdom.

Defiled with the dead = being in contact with idolaters makes the believer defiled as if he touched a dead body. "*Or if a person touches any unclean thing, whether it is the carcass of an unclean beast, or the carcass of unclean livestock, or the carcass of unclean creeping things, and he is unaware of it, he also shall be unclean and guilty. 3 Or if he touches human uncleanness--whatever uncleanness with which a man may be defiled, and he is unaware of it--when he realizes it, then he shall be guilty. (Leviticus 5:2-4).*

11 "He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. 12 He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean. 13 Whoever touches the body of anyone who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of the LORD. That person shall be cut off from Israel. He

shall be unclean, because the water of purification was not sprinkled on him; his uncleanness is still on him. (Numbers 19:11-13).

[15] Who has found her place? And who has entered her storehouses? [16] Where are the princes of the nations, and those who rule over the beasts on earth; [17] those who have sport with the birds of the air, and who hoard up silver and gold, in which men trust, and there is no end to their getting; [18] those who scheme to get silver, and are anxious, whose labors are beyond measure? [19] They have vanished and gone down to Hades, and others have arisen in their place.

It is a question which is for wisdom. Hoard up = it indicates that who ever treasure wisdom is treasuring an imperishable treasure. When Baruch asks about the one that finds wisdom, all the answers are negative which indicates that neither power, nor the leaders, nor the rich who have time and capabilities to sport with birds, or rule over the beasts; all did not attain wisdom. Even the ones who passed away and went to Hades and others took their place also did not attain wisdom. He comments that wisdom is beyond the reach of humanity ‘*7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.*’ (Proverbs 1:7).

Baruch asks a question and answers firstly in the negative indicating that no human effort can attain wisdom... *Where are the princes of the nations, and those who rule over the beasts on earth? They have vanished and gone down to Hades, and others have arisen in their place. (Baruch 3:16,19).* Then positively indicating that God has the wisdom, and He gave it to the people of Israel in the book of law. (Baruch 3:24-Baruch 4:4).

[20] Young men have seen the light of day, and have dwelt upon the earth; but they have not learned the way to knowledge, nor understood her paths, nor laid hold of her. [21] Their sons have strayed far from her way. [22] She has not been heard of in Canaan, nor seen in Teman; [23] the sons of Hagar, who seek for understanding on the earth, the merchants of Merran and Teman, the story-tellers and the seekers for understanding, have not learned the way to wisdom, nor given thought to her paths.

Here Baruch continue saying that even their children did not benefit from the past of their fathers, and they did not take any lesson from it, but rather they insisted to stay away from God.

Canaan = is the fourth son of Ham. *6 The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. (Genesis 10:6).* And he is also the grandson of Noah, and the grandfather of the tribes that lived to the west of the Jordan which is called Canaan, the people of Canaan were well known for their wisdom in trade and their skills in marketing.

Teman = is a Hebrew name which means “the right or south” and the well know in that land is Eliphaz the friend of Job the righteous, and Teman was well known for its wisdom.

Sons of Hagar = they are the Ismalities and they possessed caravans and were well known merchants.

Merran = is an unknown place.

The story-tellers = they are the one who put the general proverbs in the conduct of wisdom.

All of those, not the wisdom of the Canaanites in trade, nor the Teman, nor the sons of Hagar, nor the people of Merran, nor the storytellers, had any of them got the wisdom by the power from within. Here he explains that the nations and tribes that were well known for their wisdom, did not really know the true wisdom

[24] O Israel, how great is the house of God! And how vast the territory that he possesses! [25] It is great and has no bounds; it is high and immeasurable.

[26] The giants were born there, who were famous of old, great in stature, expert in war. [27] God did not choose them, nor give them the way to knowledge; [28] so they perished because they had no wisdom, they perished through their folly.

House of God = it means the entire world the whole universe.

The giants = they are creatures mentioned in the holy Bible before the flood.

'There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.' (Genesis 6:4). They were rebellious and were well known for their size and power.

And Baruch started to look all around on the land and review the past and visit the future, so that he can find someone who had attained the wisdom? He found no one of the giants (3:26) one of which was Nimrod, which the Bible describes as being a giant.

8 Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD." (Genesis 10:8,9). It is said that Nimrod was the founder of Babel, Erech, and Calneh.

10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. (Genesis 10:10). One of his followers named this collection of stars (kasila which

in the Hebrew language means the collection of stars by the name of Virgo). On the name of Nimrod, the great God of Babylon “Murdock” is named, which is translated in Hebrew to Nimrod. Both names come from the name ‘mord’ meaning giant, those did not attain wisdom, for their wisdom were earthly, egoistic and evil.

15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. (James 3:15). and they perished with it.

[29] Who has gone up into heaven, and taken her, and brought her down from the clouds? [30] Who has gone over the sea, and found her, and will buy her for pure gold? [31] No one knows the way to her, or is concerned about the path to her. [32] But he who knows all things knows her, he found her by his understanding. He who prepared the earth for all time filled it with four-footed creatures;

ibrez = is an Arabic word which is commonly used to describe pure gold. Unlike all those whom we spoke about, the Lord is the only one Who knows were it is.

[33] he who sends forth the light, and it goes, called it, and it obeyed him in fear; [34] the stars shone in their watches, and were glad; he called them, and they said, "Here we are!" They shone with gladness for him who made them. [35] This is our God; no other can be compared to him! [36] He found the whole way to knowledge, and gave her to Jacob his servant and to Israel whom he loved. [37] Afterward she appeared upon earth and lived among men.

God is the one who found the unit of wisdom, and he is the one who knows its way, and by it He created the creation, for Solomon describe it as ‘ the maker of everything and the fashioner of the universe . ‘*[5] If riches are a desirable possession in life, what is richer than wisdom who effects all things? [6] And if understanding is effective, who more than she is fashioner of what exists? (Wisdom of Solomon 8:5,6).*

For the Lord gave it to Jacob his servant and Israel his beloved and said: *“Then the Creator of all things gave me a commandment, and the one who created me assigned a place for my tent. And he said, ‘Make your dwelling in Jacob, and in Israel receive your inheritance.’ (Sirach 24:8).*

The Jewish released that wisdom which God has created the whole universe with all its beauty in heaven and earth, has all been put into His Book, so that this torah will be declared, and the wisdom of God vivid in heaven and earth.

No other God like Him = no one in His likeness.

It these verses Baruch the prophet –as in the rest of the Holy Bible – confirms that there is no other God like Him, and He was the one Who gave the law to Jacob His servant and Israel his beloved, and said to them regarding wisdom: *‘Make your dwelling in Jacob, and in Israel receive your inheritance.’ (Sirach 24:13).*

It is said in the New Testament that it is the way to educate by the word. For Our Lord Jesus Christ says: ‘*17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law (the natural law and the moral law as it is the law of Moses) or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. (Matthew 5:17). which means to fulfill the meanings.*

[38] Afterward she appeared upon earth and lived among men.

There has never been a verse that is so theologically controversial as this verse is! As the early fathers used it in declaring the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, in fighting the heresy of Arius.

1. Saint Hilary of Poitiers used it in his fourth book (De Trinitate), and his book used to deal; with the three hypostasis, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; he used this verse in proving the incarnation of God. He also used it for the second time in his fifth book of the same series.
2. Saint Gregory of Nyssa used it in his second book (the incarnation of the logos)
3. Saint Athanasios also used it in answering the people of Arius, in his speech against the heresy of Arius.
4. Saint Cyril of Jerusalem used it in his eleventh lecture about the word the Son of God before all ages.
5. Saint Hypolytus used it too.

Baruch the prophet wrote this verse were he was in a state of transfiguration, as St John the beloved was in the spirit. “*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,*” (Rev 1:10).

Baruch the prophet found himself this reality, that God himself appear on earth and walk among people. (Baruch 3:37), he did not say appeared in Judah, and walked among Jerusalem, for God the word when he appeared in the nations too, as He visited Egypt and walked among its people, “*14 When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, 15 and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son. (Matthew 2:14,15).*

Like Baruch the prophet Micah the prophet “*For behold, the LORD is coming out of His place; He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth.*”(Micah 1:3). And he explains that in saying “*All this is for the transgression of Jacob*”(Micah 1:5). St John also explains the God walked among the people in the famous verse “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*” (john 1:15).

And he add saying “*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, Which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life*”(1 John 1:1).



St Paul said: “And without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifested in the flesh,” (1 timothy 3:16).

For Baruch saw Him walking among the people as in walking doing goodness, walking her means not staying for ever, and that is what O’ Lord Jesus Christ did when he walked among us, and after His ascension to heaven that He sent to us the comforting Spirit that stays with us for ever. *“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever”* (John 14:16). *“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.”*(John 16:7).

Chapter Four

Educate with Punishment

[1] She is the book of the commandments of God, and the law that endures forever. All who hold her fast will live, and those who forsake her will die. [2] Turn, O Jacob, and take her; walk toward the shining of her light. [3] Do not give your glory to another, or your advantages to an alien people. [4] Happy are we, O Israel, for we know what is pleasing to God.

Do not give your glory to another: the glory of Israel is the Torah or the testament. Here Baruch is writing the orders of God, that will give life to those who hold fast to it, and also ask the people of Jacob to repent and please God. Compare (Baruch 4:1) with (Deut 4:8) *and what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law, which I set before you this day?*

Walk toward the shining of her light: here Baruch is warning the people of Israel to repent and return, and walk in the light “testament and the testament is wisdom” (Baruch 4:2). “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (psalms 118:105). *For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light;*(proverbs 6: 23).

Compare (Baruch 4:2) with (Deut 4: 1) *"Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you"*.

Turn, O Jacob: out of God’s love to Jacob and his descendants and out of His care for them He orders them to repent, but does not force them to repent because man is free willed and is not predestinate, and the heaven rejoice in the repentance of one sinner.

[5] Take courage, my people, and O memorial of Israel! [6] It was not for destruction that you were sold to the nations, but you were handed over to your enemies because you angered God. [7] For you provoked him who made you, by sacrificing to demons and not to God. [8] You forgot the everlasting God, who brought you up, and you grieved Jerusalem, who reared you. [9] For she saw the wrath that came upon you from God, and she said: "Hearken, you neighbors of Zion, God has brought great sorrow upon me;

you were sold to the nations: it means you were under the exile and slavery as a punishment.

By sacrificing to demons: meaning you offered to idols.

Here Baruch explains to the people who is in exile, why they are being punished, their exile was a punishment to them for leaving God, and worshiped idols (demons), that is why God left them to be exiled for punishment, as instead of offering to God they offered to demons, and they offered human sacrifices from their own sons and daughters. (Baruch 4: 7).

15" But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked; you grew fat, you grew thick, you are obese! Then he forsook God who made him, and scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation. 16 They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign Gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. 17 They sacrificed to demons, not to God, to Gods they did not know, To new Gods, new arrivals that your fathers did not fear. 18 Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful, and have forgotten the God who fathered you. (Deut 32:15-18). They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons, (psalms 106:37). 20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. (1 Cor 10:20).

[10] For I have seen the captivity of my sons and daughters, which the Everlasting brought upon them. [11] With joy I nurtured them, but I sent them away with weeping and sorrow. [12] Let no one rejoice over me, a widow and bereaved of many; I was left desolate because of the sins of my children, because they turned away from the law of God. [13] They had no regard for his statutes; they did not walk in the ways of God's commandments, nor tread the paths of discipline in his righteousness. [14] Let the neighbors of Zion come; remember the capture of my sons and daughters, which the Everlasting brought upon them. [15] For he brought against them a nation from afar, a shameless nation, of a strange language, who had no respect for an old man, and had no pity for a child. [16] They led away the widow's beloved sons, and bereaved the lonely woman of her daughters.



God has sent my children into exile (4.14)

صَدْرُ يَهُوَى [سُرِّيَ] (4:14)

49 The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, 50 a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young. 51 And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you. 52 "They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you. (Deut 28:49-52). This shows that the verse was taken from Deuteronomy and that Jeremiah the prophet was talking about Babylon.

Here Jerusalem is directing its talk to its neighbors from the other cities, and nations, to explain to them that God was the one who allowed for exile because of the deed of its nation, and by them not abiding in the Lord's commandments, and warn them that if they do not repent, they will receive the same punishment, and it describe Babylon as a nation with no mercy even with the elderly and the children, and here he mentioned the elderly and the children to show how this nation had no humanity, for children need compassion in their treatment, and help and compassion to the elderly, but this nation had no mercy or compassion.

Compare (baruch 4:9-16). With (lam 1:17-22).

[17] "But I, how can I help you? [18] For he who brought these calamities upon you will deliver you from the hand of your enemies. [19] Go, my children, go; for I have been left desolate. [20] I have taken off the robe of peace and put on the sackcloth of my supplication; I will cry to the Everlasting all my days. [21] "Take courage, my children, cry to God and he will deliver you from the power and hand of the enemy. [22] For I have put my hope in the Everlasting to save you, and joy has come to me from the Holy One, because of the mercy which soon will come to you from your everlasting Savior.

Robe of peace: it is the dress of lamentation and supplication.

Desolate: vacant and sad.

Here Jerusalem is directing its talk to the people in exile, and says that I can not help, for God can only help, and can only help if you repent and here it explain "go my children go" which is a message for them to walk in the ways of repentance, and the repetition is an indicator to them for repentance and supplication and wearing sack cloth, which are all signs of repentance and seeking God's forgiveness and help, and all of that makes God send His mercy to them.

Was could also notice the doctrine of the Holy trinity (I put my hope in the everlasting)= God the Father the eternal, (and the mercy which soon will come to you from the everlasting savior)= means the Son the word, and savior of the entire world.

[23] For I sent you out with sorrow and weeping, but God will give you back to me with joy and gladness for ever .[24] For as the neighbors of Zion have now seen your capture, so they soon will see your salvation by God, which will come to you with great glory and with the splendor of the Everlasting. [25] My children, endure with patience the wrath that has come upon you from God. Your enemy has overtaken you, but you will soon see their destruction and will tread upon their necks. [26] My tender sons have traveled rough roads; they were taken away like a flock carried off by the enemy.

[27] "Take courage, my children, and cry to God, for you will be remembered by him who brought this upon you. [28] For just as you purposed to go astray from God, return with tenfold zeal to seek him. [29] For he who brought these calamities upon you will bring you everlasting joy with your salvation."



A Map showing Jerusalem and its neighbors

Zion: A Hebrew name, which means a castle and most likely is referring to Jerusalem in its entirety.

Tread upon their necks: means you rein over them when they bought them as slaves.
24 So it was, when they brought out those kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the captains of the men of war who went with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." And they drew near and put their feet on their necks. (Joshua 10:24).

Then Jerusalem continue its tale with the exiled people and explain to them its feelings when it farewell crying that the Lord will restore them in great Joy, and eternal joy, and now as its neighbor saw her crying at the exile for the salvation of the Lord, they will also see her in Joy in the return. Here also Jerusalem is encouraging it's children and asks them to be patient and prophecy for them that the enemy that captivated them will perish soon. (Baruch 4:25).

This prophecy was fulfilled in no time, for the kingdoms of Mady and Persia appeared there after and conquered Babylon, and gave the freedom to those who were in exile and from among them where the Jews. The people of Mady used to sell the captivated to buy them as salves and remember to be strong in faith, as the Lord will remember them, and you have to repent, and remember how the Lord have left you and this exile was for your punishment to know that when you left the Lord you lost everything, but the one who is firm in the Lord will have everlasting Joy and salvation.

Reference: (Baruch 4:23).

12 Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, Streaming to the goodness of the LORD-- For wheat and new wine and oil, For the young of the flock and the herd; Their souls shall be like a well-watered garden, and they shall sorrow no more at all.

13 " Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old, together; For I will turn there mourning to joy, Will comfort them, and make them rejoice rather than sorrow. (Jeremiah 31:12-13).

[31] Wretched will be those who afflicted you and rejoiced at your fall. [32] Wretched will be the cities which your children served as slaves; wretched will be the city which received your sons. [33] For just as she rejoiced at your fall and was glad for your ruin, so she will be grieved at her own desolation. [34] And I will take away her pride in her great population, and her insolence will be turned to grief. [35] For fire will come upon her from the Everlasting for many days, and for a long time she will be inhabited by demons.

Wretched will be the city which received your son: it is an inclination to the people of Babylon and all the cities of Babylon, but the author means the kings of Solocian that have persecuted the people of Israel. Here Baruch directs his words to Jerusalem encouraging them saying be assured Jerusalem for the one who named you and made you His own city will save you.



A picture for the hills of Babylon “**Wretched will be the city which received your son**”.

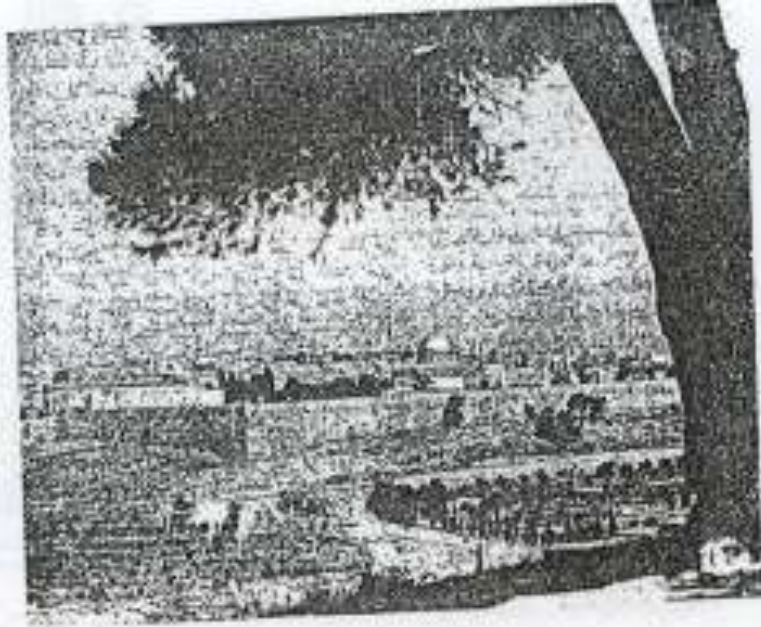
God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn. (Ps 46:5).

14 Also the sons of those who afflicted you shall come bowing to you, and all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet; and they shall call you The City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel. (Isaiah 60:14).

The prophets of the old testament they used to glorify the city of Jerusalem not because it was a political city or the administrative capital and not because of its great history and its great building, but because of the temple of the Lord that is in its midst. They were in sorrow because they were away from the temple and He says to Jerusalem woe to all who mock you for if they do not repent they drink from the same cup. Wretched will be the city which receive your children, and we knew what happened to Babylon (Baruch 4:25). He prophecy what will happen to Babylon, for the city will be burned and destroyed and the devils will occupy it forever, and this is what happened as the Babylonian worshiped idols and the devils who dwelled in them.



صلاة في الجانب الشرقي لمنطقة الهيكل في اورشليم



الركن الجنوبي الشرقي من اورشليم كما يراه من جبل الزيتون

The Babylonian Gods:

1 Enlil, it was the God Nippur and it was the greatest God in the old ages and it was the God of Babylon

2 Anu: the meaning of its name is heaven and it became the God of heaven.

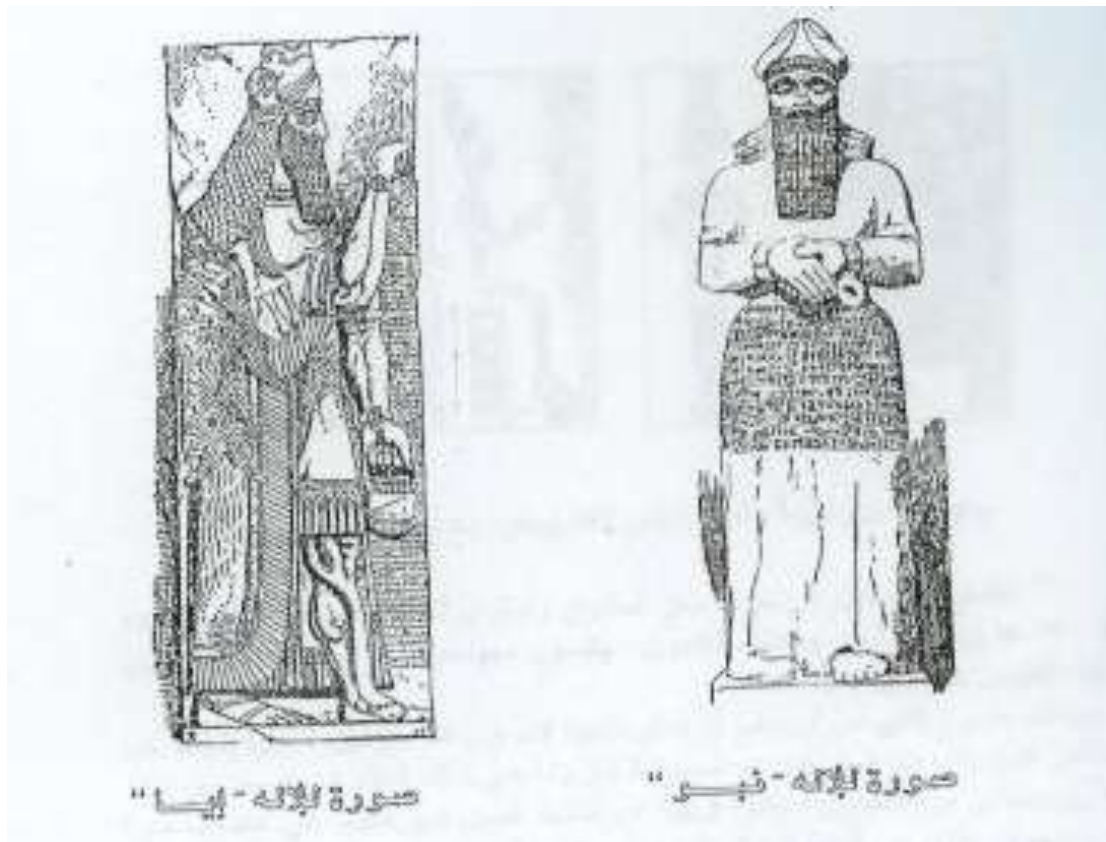
3 Ea: the reading of the name of this God is still indefinite, as it is more likely to be read as Aps in Greek as it meant the father of the God Marduk.

4 Shamash: it is the God of sun.

5 Ishtar: it is the God of love and fertility.

6 Marduk: it is mentioned in the Old Testament and it is the God of the city of Babylon.

7 Nabu : it is the God of the city of Borsippa it is a celestial God and his name means the speaker.





صورة لعبادة إله القمر

صورة لإله الشمس وأحد كونه



« منسنا من أمة يابل التي كان يحاربها أرميا النبي »

[36] Look toward the east, O Jerusalem, and see the joy that is coming to you from God! [37] Behold, your sons are coming, whom you sent away; they are coming, gathered from east and west, at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God.

Baruch the prophet asks from Jerusalem to look towards the east and here there are two prophecies, one for the salvation that will come from the east and it is the Lord Christ that was born in one of the cities of the east and rose from the east and will come from the east, and the second prophecy is about its children that will come back to its bosom from the east and the west by the order of the Lord rejoicing in His Glory.

Compare: (Baruch 4:37).

+ *Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and gather you from the west; (Isaiah 43:5).*

+ 4" *Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be nursed at your side.*

5 *Then you shall see and become radiant, and your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you. 6 The multitude of camels shall cover your land, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense, And they shall proclaim the praises of the LORD. 7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall ascend with acceptance on My altar, and I will glorify the house of My glory. " Who are these who fly like a cloud, And like doves to their roosts? 9 Surely the coastlands shall wait for Me; And the ships of Tarshish will come first, To bring your sons from afar, Their silver and their gold with them, To the name of the LORD your God, and to the Holy One of Israel, Because He has glorified you. (Isaiah 60:4-9).*



Chapter Five

Salvation

[1] Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem, and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God. [2] Put on the robe of the righteousness from God; put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting. [3] For God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven. [4] For your name will for ever be called by God," Peace of righteousness and glory of Godliness."

Baruch the prophet asks from Jerusalem to take off the sad cloth and humiliation and instead to put on glory, honor, and righteousness, and to put on its head the crown of the Glory of God.

For God will revile your glory to all who are under heaven, and your name that God call you with is forever the peace of righteousness and the glory of worship.

+Refer to the names of Jerusalem “*26 I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city.*” (Isaiah 1:26). “*Also the sons of those who afflicted you Shall come bowing to you, and all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the Soles of your feet; and they shall call you The City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.*” (Isaiah 60:14). “*16 In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*” (Jeremiah 33:16). “*All the way around shall be eighteen thousand cubits; and the name of the city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE.*” (Ezekiel 48:35).

Compare (Baruch 5:1,2) with:

+ Awake, awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city! For the uncircumcised and the unclean shall no longer come to you. (Isaiah 52:1).

+³ *To console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified. "And they shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations.⁵ Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, And the sons of the foreigner shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.⁶ But you shall be named the priests of the LORD, they shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory you shall boast.⁷ Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, and instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be theirs.⁸" For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery for burnt offering; I will direct their work in truth, and will make with them an everlasting covenant.⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the posterity whom the LORD has blessed."¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness,*

As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. (Isaiah 61:3-10).

+ “Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” (Revelations 21:2).

[5] Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height and look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east, at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that God has remembered them. [6] For they went forth from you on foot, led away by their enemies; but God will bring them back to you, carried in glory, as on a royal throne. [7] For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God. [8] The woods and every fragrant tree have shaded Israel at God's command. [9] For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.



[9] For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness that come from him. (Baruch 5:9).

St Baruch the prophet requests Jerusalem to quickly rise up and stand on a high place and to look around and see how the Lord have ordered to gather her children from the east and the west to gather in Joy as they left it in bare foot under captivity, but will return in the honor of kings and the Lord will make way through the hills and mountains and fill the valley and clear the way on the ground; all that because He cares for His children to make it safely; not only that but He will overshadow them with the trees of fragrance and they will come in Joy, Happiness, and glory. This is the price of repentance and being with God. (The one who is faithful to the end will be saved).

This happens in our daily life for we will meet hard days, from persecution, war and struggle against the world and its desires and against the devil and his armies and also sometimes internal fight from within the family and from within the Church, and sometimes from the world as they will mock us when we say we are going to Church or we are fasting, but the one who is faithful to the end will be saved. All that is not equal to a second of being in the presence of the Lord in heaven to be with the angels and the saints and this was the equation which our fathers the saints have fully understood. For the body will definitely will perish one day, but when it perish in the way of salvation and spreading God's word then that is a great gain.

These verses declare the prophecy of Baruch the prophet that prophecy that the children of Jerusalem will defiantly come back to it in no time, and this return is not in their own power or strength, but it is the word of God that never comes back empty. They will come from the east and the west indicating that they will come from far places and from all the corners of the earth.

Carried in glory, as on a royal throne: this is the new exodus. *3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness:" Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough place s smooth; (Isaiah 40:3,4).*



Chapter six

The Letter of Jeremiah

The letter of Jeremiah is a small book, and it was addressed to those who were ready to go to exile.



صورة إرميا النبي الباكين

A Picture for Jeremiah the prophet crying.

The time in which the letter was written

It is more likely to be written in the second century before the birth of Christ. It was sent to the people of Judah in the capital of Solocian in Antioch. These people were facing persecution because of their faith and worship, so the letter came with a vigorous attack on the false Gods and idols.

The writer of the letter had the subject in correlation with what came in the books of Jeremiah and the book of Isaiah, and presented it in a colorful sarcastic manner.

The main subject of the letter was the idols that were not able to talk, move or watch. Since these idols were not able to defend itself against the time, stealing and destruction, how can it protect those who seek its refuge? So depart from the worship of these idols for there are not God and seek the only capable and powerful God.

A copy of a letter that Jeremiah sent to those who were to be taken to Babylon as exiles by the king of the Babylonians, to give them the message that God had commanded him.

I because of the sins that you have committed before God, you will be taken to Babylon as exiles by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylonians therefore when you have come to Babylon you will remain there for many years, for a long time up to seven generations, after that I will bring you away from there in peace.

Jeremiah: it is a Hebrew name, which means the Lord sets a foundation.

Seventh generation: it is believed that the generation is a period of forty years. Jeremiah the prophet explains to the people the reason for their exile and that was because of their sins and they remain in exile for over 280 years and after that they will return safely. This exile was for the edification and the forgiveness and humility and the return to God.



2 Now in Babylon you will see Gods made of silver and gold and wood, which cause the heathen to fear. So beware of becoming at all like the foreigners or of letting fear for these Gods possess you when you see the multitude before and behind them worshipping them. But you say in your heart " it is you, O' Lord, whom we must worship. For my angel is with you and he is watching over your lives. Their tongues are smoothed by the carpenter, and they themselves are overlaid with gold and silver, but they are false and cannot speak.

We see here that saint Baruch the prophet was warning the people from what they about to see from the idols and the Gods that are made of hands, and how these idols put fear in the inhabitants of these nations, so they are warned not to be like them, but on the contrary when they see that they should give glory honor and worship to the true God the God of Israel. He describe these Gods as God s with tongues made by the craftsmen and it can not talk, and even though it might be covered by gold and silver but inside it there is wood or stone,

He asks for you: he pleads for your souls.

People take gold and make crowns for the heads of their Gods, as they might for a girl who loves ornaments, and make crowns for the heads of their Gods. Sometimes the priests secretly take gold and silver from their Gods and spend it on themselves, or even give some of it to the prostitutes on the terrace.

The Babylonian were looking after their Gods as the lady decorate herself and they make the crowns from gold but the priests they used to steel these crowns and gold and spent it on their own and they were an example for leadership to the people???

They deck their Gods out with garments like human beings these Gods of silver and gold and wood that cannot save themselves from rust and corrosion. When they have been dressed in purple robes, their faces are wiped because of the dust from the temple, which is thick upon them. One of them holds a scepter, like a district judge, but is unable to destroy anyone who offends it. Another has a dagger in its right hand, and an ax, but cannot defend itself from war and robbers. From this it is evident that they are not Gods; so do not fear them.

Purple: is a dye that was a specialty for the Phoenician industry. it is a dye that is extracted from seashells, in Latin it is called *miorix tronicolis*, the seashells are broken and from them is extracted a fluid like substance, which is refined to bring about a blue liquid that turns to purple or red as it gets oxidized. This dye was used in coloring cloth and especially expensive cloths.

Those priests took the money from selling the crowns that belonged to the Gods and spent it on decorations and this is due to the weakness of these Gods, for they are dressed like humans but they rust and decay though being painted in gold and silver, those Gods can not even wipe their faces if dust came upon them, it can not defend itself if anyone trespassed against them, though they carry swords, and axes in their hands!!!

After all that Baruch the prophet ends his talk about them that they cannot truly be called Gods.

For just as someone's dish is useless when it is broken, so are their Gods when they have been set up in the temples. Their eyes are full of the dust raised by the feet of those who enter. And just as the gates are shut on every side against anyone who has offended a king, as though under sentence of death, so the priests make their temples secure with doors and locks and bars, in order that they may not be plundered by robbers.

Baruch here tells the people not to fear them for they are useless and fearless, for they are like broken pots that benefits no one. For when they put them in the houses their eyes get filled with dust proving that their eyes can not see, and their priests cover them and hide them in cabinets and behind doors so robbers cannot steal as if they are sentenced to life long imprisonment proving even more that these are not Gods.

They light more lamps for them than they light for themselves, though their Gods can see none of them. They are just like a beam of the temple, but their hearts, it is said are eaten away when crawling creatures from the earth devour them and their robes. They do not notice, when their faces have been blackened by the smoke of the temple. Bats swallow and birds alight on their bodies and heads, and so do cats. From this you will know that they are not Gods; so do not fear them.

Baruch continue to talk about these Gods and say: they light lamps but these Gods have no eyes to see, for even the bats and cats eat from their bodies and they stand defenseless and senseless. Smoke blackens their faces and they don't wipe them clean, birds and bats fly on top of their heads they are with no response. Can we call them Gods after all that?? And fear them?

As for the gold that they wear for beauty it will not shine unless someone wipes off the tarnish, for even when they were being cast, they did not feel it. They are bought without regard to cost, but there is no breath in them. Having no feet, they are carried on the shoulders of others, reveling to humankind their worthlessness. And those who serve them are put to shame because if any of these Gods' falls to the ground they themselves must pick it up. If anyone sets it upright it cannot move itself; and if it is tipped over it cannot straighten itself. Gifts are placed before them just as before the dead.

Them just as before the dead: compare it with (Isaiah 46:7)"*they bear it on the shoulder, they carry it and set it in its place, and it stands; from its place it shall not move. Though one cries out to it, yet it cannot answer nor save him out of his trouble.*"

Baruch continue his talk about these Gods and how useless they are as someone has to wipe it to make it shine, it has no legs but rather carried on shoulders, how can that be a God if it can not move unless someone carry it around. For even those who worship it mock it and say if it fall it will break, and if it fall but still in one piece it can not rise on its own!!!



The priests sell the sacrifices that are offered to these Gods and use the money themselves. Likewise their wives preserve some of the meat with salt, but give none to the poor or helpless. Sacrifices to them may even be touched by women in their periods or at childbirth, since you know by these things that they are not Gods, do not fear them. For how can they be called Gods? Women serve meals for Gods of silver and gold and wood and their clothes torn, their heads and beards shaved and their heads uncovered. They howl and shout before their Gods as some do at funeral banquet. The priests take some of the clothing of their Gods to clothe their wives and children.

They howl and shout before their Gods as some do at funeral banquet: Symbolises the worship that celebrate death and resurrection of Gods.

The priests take all the offerings to sell for their own personal benefit, and the poor and helpless see nothing from what has been offered, and even women in periods and childbirth touches the offering and this did not befit the law of Moses. Here Baruch the prophet asks a question..... Why do we call it Gods? He answers and says: is it because it has priests that sit with torn cloths and have shaved their heads and shout as if in funeral. Or is because the priests steel the clothes to their children and wives?

The women at periods and childbirth are impure, for the person become impure if he ate from forbidden food (Leviticus 11), or touched a dead (Numbers 19:11-22), or idols (Acts 10:1, 11:18)

Or gave birth to a child: "*Speak to the children of Israel, saying: "If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean."*(Leviticus 12:2).

Or been infected with leprosy: "*The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of the body; and if the hair on the sore has turned white, and the sore appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is a leprous sore. Then the priest shall examine him, and pronounce him unclean.*"(Leviticus 13:3).

In those conditions it is not allowed to partake of the rituals of worships till purified. (Leviticus 12:6-8). ⁶ "When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for A son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest a lamb of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁷ Then he shall offer it before the LORD, and make Atonement for her. And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who has borne a male or a female. ⁸ "And if she is not able to bring a lamb, then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons--one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean." (Leviticus 14:1-32).

Verse 29= **touched by women**: among the people of Israel priesthood was kept for men only and not women.

Verse 30= **and in their temples the priests sit with their clothes torn, their heads and beards shaved, and their heads uncovered**. These were the signs of lamination among the people of Israel. Compare to:

"You **are** the children of the LORD your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave the front of your head for the dead. (Deu 14:1).

+And Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons, "Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon all the people. But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel; bewail the burning which the LORD has kindled. (Lev 10:6).

²⁰ "They shall neither shave their heads, nor let their hair grow long, but they shall keep their hair well trimmed. (Ezk 44:20).

³⁴ **Whether one does evil to them or good, they will not be able to repay it. They cannot set up a king or depose one.** ³⁵ **Likewise they are not able to give either wealth or money; if one makes a vow to them and does not keep it, they will not require it.** ³⁶ **They cannot save anyone from death or rescue the weak from the strong.** ³⁷ **They cannot restore sight to the blind; they cannot rescue one who is in distress.** ³⁸ **They cannot take pity on a widow or do good to an orphan.** ³⁹ **These things that are made of wood and overlaid with gold and silver are like stones from the mountain, and those who serve them will be put to shame.** ⁴⁰ **Why then must anyone think that they are Gods, or call them Gods?**

Baruch continues his talk about these Gods showing how weak they are, as it can not appoint a king or save any from death, or heal a blind or relief those in trouble, can not help a widow or an orphan, for it is made of wood and stone and those who worship it are put to shame, and then he ask after all this can it be called or counted as a God.

This was opposite to the God of Israel who used to appoint and uphold kings: *Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said: "Is it not because the LORD has anointed you commander over His inheritance? (1 Sam 10:1).*
¹³ *Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah. (1 Sam 16:13).*

⁸ Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. ¹⁵ But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. (2 Sam 7:8, 15).

Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: "I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. (2 Sam 12:7). "Thus says the LORD to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held-- To subdue nations before him and loose the armor of kings, to open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut (Isaiah 45:1).

³⁸ **They cannot take pity on a widow or do good to an orphan.** : compare to "⁶ God sets the solitary in families; He brings out those who are bound into prosperity; but the rebellious dwell in a dry land. ⁷ O God, when You went out before Your people, When You marched through the wilderness, (Ps 68:6, 7).

. ⁴⁰ **Why then must anyone think that they are Gods, or call them Gods? Besides, even the Chaldeans themselves dishonor them; for when they see someone who cannot speak, they bring Bel and pray that the mute may speak, as though Bel^k were able to understand!** ⁴¹ **Yet they themselves cannot perceive this and abandon them, for they have no sense.** ⁴² **And the women, with cords around them, sit along the passageways, burning bran for incense.** ⁴³ **When one of them is led off by one of the passers-by and is taken to bed by him, she derides the woman next to her, because she was not as attractive as herself and her cord was not broken.** ⁴⁴ **Whatever is done for these idols^l is false. Why then must anyone think that they are Gods, or call them Gods?**

He then shows the treatment of the Chaldeans to these Gods, as they ask from these Gods to heal the mute, but it can achieve nothing and he liken them to senseless, and feeling less, for if they did feel they would have known that these are stones that can not hear or heal. He also explains the mischief in the worship for false Gods, so can it be counted or named as Gods?

Chaldeans = or Babylonian refer to " "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: "Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, with which you fight against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who besiege you outside the walls; and I will assemble them in the midst of this city. (Jeremiah 21:4).

Bel= the master or king: it is the title for the God of Babylon refer:" " Declare among the nations, Proclaim, and set up a standard; Proclaim--do not conceal it- Say, "Babylon is taken, Bel is shamed. Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are humiliated, her images are broken in pieces. (Jeremiah 50:2).

with cords around them = it is an old tradition in the holy prostitution as raising incense with bran is a magical way of arousing desires.

45 They are made by carpenters and goldsmiths; they can be nothing but what the artisans wish them to be. ⁴⁶Those who make them will certainly not live very long themselves; ⁴⁷how then can the things that are made by them be Gods? They have left only lies and reproach for those who come after. ⁴⁸For when war or calamity comes upon them, the priests consult together as to where they can hide themselves and their Gods ⁴⁹How then can one fail to see that these are not Gods, for they cannot save themselves from war or calamity? ⁵⁰Since they are made of wood and overlaid with gold and silver, it will afterward be known that they are false. ⁵¹It will be manifest to all the nations and kings that they are not Gods but the work of human hands, and that there is no work of God in them. ⁵²Who then can fail to know that they are not Gods

If the idolatry worship as disappeared from the world to a certain extent but it is still in use in the lives of so many. When someone worships money, or desire, or pleasures, or the love of false glory all of which are Gods that take you away from the worship of the true God.

Baruch reveals that these Gods have no will as it's will lies with those who made it., in its size and shape, and how it is a burden for its priests to hide it for it can not protect itself or save itself from the enemies.

53 For they cannot set up a king over a country or give rain to people. ⁵⁴They cannot judge their own cause or deliver one who is wronged, for they have no power; ⁵⁵they are like crows between heaven and earth. When fire breaks out in a temple of wooden Gods overlaid with gold or silver, their priests will flee and escape, but the Gods will be burned up like timbers. ⁵⁶Besides, they can offer no resistance to king or enemy. Why then must anyone admit or think that they are Gods?

Burned up like timbers: as the wood ram of the house.

Baruch complete his words to show how useless these Gods are as they can not appoint a king or bring rain, and can not defend itself or those who are oppressed or if they are burnt in the temple, as its fate is to burnt, as it can not escape or defend itself.

Give rain to people = compare to " *Are there any among the idols of the nations that can cause rain? Or can the heavens give showers? Are You not He, O LORD our God? Therefore we will wait for You, since You have made all these. (Jeremiah 14:22).*

Deliver one who is wronged = compare to " *6The LORD executes righteousness And justice for all who are oppressed." (Ps 104:6).*

57 Gods made of wood and overlaid with silver and gold are unable to save themselves from thieves or robbers. ⁵⁸Anyone who can will strip them of their gold and silver and of the robes they wear, and go off with this booty, and they will not be able to help themselves. ⁵⁹So it is better to be a king who shows his courage, or a household utensil that serves its owner's need, than to be these false Gods; better even the door of a house that protects its contents, than these false Gods; better also a wooden pillar in a palace, than these false Gods. ⁶⁰For sun and moon and stars are bright, and when sent to do a service, they are obedient. ⁶¹So also the lightning, when it flashes, is widely seen; and the wind likewise blows in every land. ⁶²When God commands the clouds to go over the whole world, they carry out his command. ⁶³And the fire sent from above

to consume mountains and woods does what it is ordered. But these idols are not to be compared with them in appearance or power. ⁶⁴Therefore one must not think that they are Gods, nor call them Gods, for they are not able either to decide a case or to do good to anyone. ⁶⁵Since you know then that they are not Gods do not fear them.

Baruch the prophet compare between the beneficial things and these false Gods. We find that the door has more value than those false Gods. Even the pillar has more value than those Gods and the vessel too. The moon stars and sun has more value than these Gods as they give light and the people benefit from them more than from these Gods which can do nothing to itself or others.

⁶⁶They can neither curse nor bless kings; ⁶⁷they cannot show signs in the heavens for the nations, or shine like the sun or give light like the moon. ⁶⁸The wild animals are better than they are, for they can flee to shelter and help themselves. ⁶⁹So we have no evidence whatever that they are Gods; therefore do not fear them.

These Gods can not perform miracles among nations, and here he mentions that even though the wild animals are enemies to humans but they are still better than these Gods, for it can fight and defend itself and flee at the time of danger.

⁷⁰Like a scarecrow in a cucumber bed, which guards nothing, so are their Gods of wood, overlaid with gold and silver. ⁷¹In the same way, their Gods of wood, overlaid with gold and silver, are like a thornbush in a garden on which every bird perches; or like a corpse thrown out in the darkness. ⁷²From the purple and linen^a that rot upon them you will know that they are not Gods; and they will finally be consumed themselves, and be a reproach in the land. ⁷³Better, therefore, is someone upright who has no idols; such a person will be far above reproach.

Linen = in the Greek translation is mar mar.

Still Baruch despise these false Gods for it benefit nothing as it did not reach even to the level of scarecrow that is moved by the sower wherever he wants it to be to scare the birds, and in reality it is nothing but a piece of wood on which the sower puts cloth and a cap and human cloth that is moved by the wind. At the end he says that the man that has no idol is better for he is far away from disgrace.

Dear Reader:

The devil tries fervently and in great deceit can give you an idol in the form of a young God in your life, like the love of money and all what is in your mind is how to repay the bank loan for instance. You accept the idea easily, in order to fulfill the idea you start working two jobs and working overtime, including Saturdays and Sundays to increase your income. I am not saying you forget the Church but rather you delay going to Church, and in a matter of weeks you find yourself in the grip of work. Where is the Church? Where is Christ? Where is your care for your children? Where is your reading of the Bible? He has managed to trick you. Even after you have repaid your loan the devil would have entered your life and you would think of buying another one? Or invest in another project, for example, buying another apartment or start another project to secure the future of your children. The future of your children which was lost from you by you being busy, you might have come in terms with these facts but cannot change much, for you are busy, and since you are far from the Lord, the happiness with the devil gets even bigger, for you are truly worshipping an idol; the love of money, which the devil has decorated for you.

So many times we think that we are living the life of righteousness and faith, walking with God but yet on a very low Spiritual level and in great laziness and carelessness, hardly convincing ourselves of the need of going to Church and partaking of Holy Communion. As we walk out of the Church and join friends in the Church's yard, the devil jumps in and so we find ourselves talking and murmuring, and judging others. Other times we go late to Church and we think we attended the whole Mass, we don't even know when it started, not knowing that we should at the very least be there before the reading of the Gospel. The question is where is the blessing in my life? Where is the preparation? Is it right to watch a movie till late at night and attend the Mass the next day? That is why the Church has put in place Vespers, in order for us to be prepared to attend the Mass and partake of Holy Communion. That is why Vespers is a very important part of the Mass.

Another idol is in the form of narrow-minded personalities in the Church. As they think that the Church belongs to them only. This type of personality rejects everything, and argues for the sake of arguing, and fears any action as it thinks it's aimed at removing their "highly-valued" statues. For the devil has decorated and presented to them the devil of "I", "ME", "EGO" that destroys successful servants.

The other idol is one of time, for whoever has time you find them watching TV! When they talk with others, you find them talking about the priests, servants and people, and the talk is at the lowest level. No one escape from the sting of their tongue, that casts out venomous poison.

Dear beloved reader: you have to be precise and careful to examine if you have an idol or not? Which and what is your idol? Be careful even if it is a small idol, for we cannot serve two masters God and money. You cannot falter between two opinions, if the Lord is God then follow Him, and if Baal is God then follow him.

21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between Two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word. (1 Kings 18:21).

Ehab Wahib

FOURTH CHAPTER

The book of Baruch

Bible, Revised Standard Version
Baruch

Bar.1

[1] These are the words of the book which Baruch the son of Neraiiah, son of Mahseiah, son of Zedekiah, son of Hasadiah, son of Hilkiyah, wrote in Babylon, [2] in the fifth year, on the seventh day of the month, at the time when the Chaldeans took Jerusalem and burned it with fire. [3] And Baruch read the words of this book in the hearing of Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and in the hearing of all the people who came to hear the book, [4] and in the hearing of the mighty men and the princes, and in the hearing of the elders, and in the hearing of all the people, small and great, all who dwelt in Babylon by the river Sud. [5] Then they wept, and fasted, and prayed before the Lord; [6] and they collected money, each giving what he could; [7] and they sent it to Jerusalem to Jehoiakim the high priest, the son of Hilkiyah, son of Shallum, and to the priests, and to all the people who were present with him in Jerusalem. [8] At the same time, on the tenth day of Sivan, Baruch took the vessels of the house of the Lord, which had been carried away from the temple, to return them to the land of Judah -- the silver vessels which Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, had made, [9] after Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away from Jerusalem Jeconiah and the princes and the prisoners and the mighty men and the people of the land, and brought them to Babylon. [10] And they said: "Herewith we send you money; so buy with the money burnt offerings and sin offerings and incense, and prepare a cereal offering, and offer them upon the altar of the Lord our God; [11] and pray for the life of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and for the life of Belshazzar his son, that their days on earth may be like the days of heaven. [12] And the Lord will give us strength, and he will give light to our eyes, and we shall live under the protection of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and under the protection of Belshazzar his son, and we shall serve them many days and find favor in their sight. [13] And pray for us to the Lord our God, for we have sinned against the Lord our God, and to this day the anger of the Lord and his wrath have not turned away from us. [14] And you shall read this book which we are sending you, to make your confession in the house of the Lord on the days of the feasts and at appointed seasons.

[15] "And you shall say: `Righteousness belongs to the Lord our God, but confusion of face, as at this day, to us, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, [16] and to our kings and our princes and our priests and our prophets and our fathers, [17] because we have sinned before the Lord, [18] and have disobeyed him, and have not heeded the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in the statutes of the Lord which he set before us.

[19] From the day when the Lord brought our fathers out of the land of Egypt until today, we have been disobedient to the Lord our God, and we have been negligent, in not heeding his voice. [20] So to this day there have clung to us the calamities and the curse which the Lord declared through Moses his servant at the time when he brought our fathers out of the land of Egypt to give to us a land flowing with milk and honey. [21] We did not heed the voice of the Lord our God in all the words of the prophets whom he sent to us, but we each followed the intent of his own wicked heart by serving other Gods and doing what is evil in the sight of the Lord our God.

Bar.2

[1]"So the Lord confirmed his word, which he spoke against us, and against our judges who judged Israel, and against our kings and against our princes and against the men of Israel and Judah. [2] Under the whole heaven there has not been done the like of what he has done in Jerusalem, in accordance with what is written in the law of Moses, [3] that we should eat, one the flesh of his son and another the flesh of his daughter. [4] And he gave them into subjection to all the kingdoms around us, to be a reproach and desolation among all the surrounding peoples, where the Lord has scattered them.

[5] They were brought low and not raised up, because we sinned against the Lord our God, in not heeding his voice. [6] "Righteousness belongs to the Lord our God, but confusion of face to us and our fathers, as at this day. [7] All those calamities with which the Lord threatened us have come upon us. [8] Yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord by turning away, each of us, from the thoughts of his wicked heart. [9] And the Lord has kept the calamities ready, and the Lord has brought them upon us, for the Lord is righteous in all his works which he has commanded us to do. [10] Yet we have not obeyed his voice, to walk in the statutes of the Lord which he set before us [11] "And now, O Lord God of Israel, who didst bring thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and with signs and wonders and with great power and outstretched arm, and hast made thee a name, as at this day, [12] we have sinned, we have been unGodly, we have done wrong, O Lord our God, against all thy ordinances. [13] Let thy anger turn away from us, for we are left, few in number, among the nations where thou hast scattered us. [14] Hear, O Lord, our prayer and our supplication, and for thy own sake deliver us, and grant us favor in the sight of those who have carried us into exile; [15] that all the earth may know that thou art the Lord our God, for Israel and his descendants are called by thy name. [16] O Lord, look down from thy holy habitation, and consider us. Incline thy ear, O Lord, and hear; [17] open thy eyes, O Lord, and see; for the dead who are in Hades, whose spirit has been taken from their bodies, will not ascribe glory or justice to the Lord, [18] but the person that is greatly distressed, that goes about bent over and feeble, and the eyes that are failing, and the person that hungers, will ascribe to thee glory and righteousness, O Lord. [19] For it is not because of any righteous deeds of our fathers or our kings that we bring before thee our prayer for mercy, O Lord our God. [20] For thou hast sent thy anger and thy wrath upon us, as thou didst declare by thy servants the prophets, saying: [21] "Thus says the Lord: Bend your shoulders and serve the king of Babylon and you will remain in the land which I gave to your fathers. [22] But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord and will not serve the king of Babylon, [23] I will make to cease from the cities of Judah and from the region about Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, and the whole land will be a desolation without inhabitants." [24] "But we did not obey thy voice, to serve the king of Babylon; and thou hast confirmed thy words, which thou didst speak by thy servants the prophets, that the bones of our kings and the bones of our fathers would be brought out of their graves; [25] and behold, they have been cast out to the heat of day and the frost of night. They perished in great misery, by famine and sword and pestilence. [26] And the house which is called by thy name thou hast made as it is today, because of the wickedness of the house of Israel and the house of

Judah. [27] "Yet thou hast dealt with us, O Lord our God, in all thy kindness and in all thy great compassion, [28] as thou didst speak by thy servant Moses on the day when thou didst command him to write thy law in the presence of the people of Israel, saying, [29] "If you will not obey my voice, this very great multitude will surely turn into a small number among the nations, where I will scatter them. [30] For I know that they will not obey me, for they are a stiff-necked people. But in the land of their exile they will come to themselves, [31] and they will know that I am the Lord their God. I will give them a heart that obeys and ears that hear; [32] and they will praise me in the land of their exile, and will remember my name, [33] and will turn from their stubbornness and their wicked deeds; for they will remember the ways of their fathers, who sinned before the Lord [34] I will bring them again into the land which I swore to give to their fathers, to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob, and they will rule over it; and I will increase them, and they will not be diminished. [35] I will make an everlasting covenant with them to be their God and they shall be my people; and I will never again remove my people Israel from the land which I have given them."

Bar.3

[1] "O Lord Almighty, God of Israel, the soul in anguish and the wearied spirit cry out to thee. [2] Hear, O Lord, and have mercy, for we have sinned before thee. [3] For thou art enthroned for ever, and we are perishing for ever. [4] O Lord Almighty, God of Israel, hear now the prayer of the dead of Israel and of the sons of those who sinned before thee, who did not heed the voice of the Lord their God, so that calamities have clung to us. [5] Remember not the iniquities of our fathers, but in this crisis remember thy power and thy name. [6] For thou art the Lord our God, and thee, O Lord, will we praise. [7] For thou hast put the fear of thee in our hearts in order that we should call upon thy name; and we will praise thee in our exile, for we have put away from our hearts all the iniquity of our fathers who sinned before thee. [8] Behold, we are today in our exile where thou hast scattered us, to be reproached and cursed and punished for all the iniquities of our fathers who forsook the Lord our God." [9] Hear the commandments of life, O Israel; give ear, and learn wisdom! [10] Why is it, O Israel, why is it that you are in the land of your enemies, that you are growing old in a foreign country, that you are defiled with the dead, [11] that you are counted among those in Hades? [12] You have forsaken the fountain of wisdom. [13] If you had walked in the way of God, you would be dwelling in peace for ever. [14] Learn where there is wisdom, where there is strength, where there is understanding, that you may at the same time discern where there is length of days, and life, where there is light for the eyes, and peace. [15] Who has found her place? And who has entered her storehouses? [16] Where are the princes of the nations, and those who rule over the beasts on earth; [17] those who have sport with the birds of the air, and who hoard up silver and gold in which men trust, and there is no end to their getting; [18] those who scheme to get silver, and are anxious, whose labors are beyond measure? [19] They have vanished and gone down to Hades, and others have arisen in their place. [20] Young men have seen the light of day, and have dwelt upon the earth; but they have not learned the way to knowledge, nor understood her paths, nor laid hold of her. [21] Their sons have strayed far from her way. [22] She has not been heard of in Canaan, nor seen in Teman; [23] the sons of Hagar, who seek for understanding on the earth,

the merchants of Merran and Teman, the story-tellers and the seekers for understanding, have not learned the way to wisdom, nor given thought to her paths. [24] O Israel, how great is the house of God! And how vast the territory that he possesses! [25] It is great and has no bounds; it is high and immeasurable. [26] The giants were born there, who were famous of old, great in stature, expert in war. [27] God did not choose them, nor give them the way to knowledge; [28] so they perished because they had no wisdom, they perished through their folly. [29] Who has gone up into heaven, and taken her, and brought her down from the clouds? [30] Who has gone over the sea, and found her, and will buy her for pure gold? [31] No one knows the way to her, or is concerned about the path to her. [32] But he who knows all things knows her, he found her by his understanding. He who prepared the earth for all time filled it with four-footed creatures; [33] he who sends forth the light, and it goes, called it, and it obeyed him in fear; [34] the stars shone in their watches, and were glad; he called them, and they said, "Here we are!" They shone with gladness for him who made them. [35] This is our God; no other can be compared to him! [36] He found the whole way to knowledge, and gave her to Jacob his servant and to Israel whom he loved. [37] Afterward she appeared upon earth and lived among men.

Bar.4

[1] She is the book of the commandments of God, and the law that endures for ever. All who hold her fast will live, and those who forsake her will die. [2] Turn, O Jacob, and take her; walk toward the shining of her light. [3] Do not give your glory to another or your advantages to an alien people. [4] Happy are we, O Israel, for we know what is pleasing to God. [5] Take courage, my people, O memorial of Israel! [6] It was not for destruction that you were sold to the nations, but you were handed over to your enemies because you angered God. [7] For you provoked him who made you, by sacrificing to demons and not to God. [8] You forgot the everlasting God, who brought you up, and you grieved Jerusalem, who reared you. [9] For she saw the wrath that came upon you from God, and she said: "Hearken, you neighbors of Zion, God has brought great sorrow upon me; [10] for I have seen the captivity of my sons and daughters, which the Everlasting brought upon them. [11] With joy I nurtured them, but I sent them away with weeping and sorrow. [12] let no one rejoice over me, a widow and bereaved of many; I was left desolate because of the sins of my children, because they turned away from the law of God. [13] They had no regard for his statutes; they did not walk in the ways of God's commandments, nor tread the paths of discipline in his righteousness. [14] Let the neighbors of Zion come; remember the capture of my sons and daughters, which the Everlasting brought upon them. [15] For he brought against them a nation from afar, a shameless nation, of a strange language, who had no respect for an old man, and had no pity for a child. [16] They led away the widow's beloved sons, and bereaved the lonely woman of her daughters. [17] "But I, how can I help you? [18] For he who brought these calamities upon you will deliver you from the hand of your enemies [19] go, my children, go; for I have been left desolate? [20] I have taken off the robe of peace and put on the sackcloth of my supplication; I will cry to the Everlasting all my days. [21] "Take courage, my children, cry to God, and he will deliver you from the power and hand of the enemy. [22] For I have put my hope in the Everlasting to save you, and joy has come to me

from the Holy One, because of the mercy which soon will come to you from your everlasting Savior. [23] For I sent you out with sorrow and weeping, but God will give you back to me with joy and gladness for ever. [24] For as the neighbors of Zion have now seen your capture, so they soon will see your salvation by God, which will come to you with great glory and with the splendor of the Everlasting. [25] My children, endure with patience the wrath that has come upon you from God. Your enemy has overtaken you, but you will soon see their destruction and will tread upon their necks. [26] My tender sons have traveled rough roads; they were taken away like a flock carried off by the enemy. [27] "Take courage, my children, and cry to God, for you will be remembered by him who brought this upon you. [28] For just as you purposed to go astray from God, return with tenfold zeal to seek him. [29] For he who brought these calamities upon you will bring you everlasting joy with your salvation." [30] Take courage, O Jerusalem, for he who named you will comfort you. [31] Wretched will be those who afflicted you and rejoiced at your fall. [32] Wretched will be the cities which your children served as slaves; wretched will be the city which received your sons. [33] For just as she rejoiced at your fall and was glad for your ruin, so she will be grieved at her own desolation. [34] And I will take away her pride in her great population, and her insolence will be turned to grief. [35] For fire will come upon her from the Everlasting for many days, and for a long time she will be inhabited by demons. [36] Look toward the east, O Jerusalem, and see the joy that is coming to you from God! [37] Behold, your sons are coming, whom you sent away; they are coming, gathered from east and west, at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God.

Bar.5

[1] Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem, and put on for ever the beauty of the glory from God. [2] Put on the robe of the righteousness from God; put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting. [3] For God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven. [4] For your name will for ever be called by God, "Peace of righteousness and glory of Godliness." [5] Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height and look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east, at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that God has remembered them. [6] For they went forth from you on foot, led away by their enemies; but God will bring them back to you, carried in glory, as on a royal throne. [7] For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God. [8] The woods and every fragrant tree have shaded Israel at God's command. [9] For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness that come from him

Bar.6

The Letter of Jeremiah

6 A copy of a letter that Jeremiah sent to those who were to be taken to Babylon as exiles by the king of the Babylonians, to give them the message that God had commanded him.

The People Face a Long Captivity

2 Because of the sins that you have committed before God, you will be taken to Babylon as exiles by Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Babylonians. 3 Therefore when you have come to Babylon you will remain there for many years, for a long time, up to seven generations; after that I will bring you away from there in peace. 4 Now in Babylon you will see Gods made of silver and gold and wood, which people carry on their shoulders, and which cause the heathen to fear. 5 So beware of becoming at all like the foreigners or of letting fear for these Gods^a possess you 6 when you see the multitude before and behind them worshipping them. But say in your heart, "It is you, O Lord, whom we must worship." 7 For my angel is with you, and he is watching over your lives.

The Helplessness of Idols

8 Their tongues are smoothed by the carpenter, and they themselves are overlaid with gold and silver; but they are false and cannot speak. 9 People^b take gold and make crowns for the heads of their Gods, as they might for a girl who loves ornaments. 10 Sometimes the priests secretly take gold and silver from their Gods and spend it on themselves, 11 or even give some of it to the prostitutes on the terrace. They deck their Gods^c out with garments like human beings--these Gods of silver and gold and wood 12 that cannot save themselves from rust and corrosion. When they have been dressed in purple robes, 13 their faces are wiped because of the dust from the temple, which is thick upon them. 14 One of them holds a scepter, like a district judge, but is unable to destroy anyone who offends it. 15 Another has a dagger in its right hand, and an ax, but cannot defend itself from war and robbers. 16 From this it is evident that they are not Gods; so do not fear them.

17 For just as someone's dish is useless when it is broken, 18 so are their Gods when they have been set up in the temples. Their eyes are full of the dust raised by the feet of those who enter. And just as the gates are shut on every side against anyone who has offended a king, as though under sentence of death, so the priests make their temples secure with doors and locks and bars, in order that they may not be plundered by robbers. 19 They light more lamps for them than they light for themselves, though their Gods^d can see none of them. 20 They are^e just like a beam of the temple, but their hearts, it is said, are eaten away when crawling creatures from the earth devour them and their robes. They do not notice 21 when their faces have been blackened by the smoke of the temple. 22 Bats, swallows, and birds alight on their bodies and heads; and so do cats. 23 From this you will know that they are not Gods; so do not fear them.

24 As for the gold that they wear for beauty--it^f will not shine unless someone wipes off the tarnish; for even when they were being cast, they did not feel it. 25 They are bought without regard to cost, but there is no breath in them. 26 Having no feet, they are carried on the shoulders of others, revealing to humankind their worthlessness. And those who serve them are put to shame 27 because, if any of these Gods falls^g to the ground, they themselves must pick it up. If anyone sets it upright, it cannot move itself;

and if it is tipped over, it cannot straighten itself. Gifts are placed before them just as before the dead. ²⁸The priests sell the sacrifices that are offered to these Gods^h and use the money themselves. Likewise their wives preserve some of the meatⁱ with salt, but give none to the poor or helpless. ²⁹Sacrifices to them may even be touched by women in their periods or at childbirth. Since you know by these things that they are not Gods, do not fear them.

30 For how can they be called Gods? Women serve meals for Gods of silver and gold and wood; ³¹and in their temples the priests sit with their clothes torn, their heads and beards shaved, and their heads uncovered. ³²They howl and shout before their Gods as some do at a funeral banquet. ³³The priests take some of the clothing of their Gods^j to clothe their wives and children. ³⁴Whether one does evil to them or good, they will not be able to repay it. They cannot set up a king or depose one. ³⁵Likewise they are not able to give either wealth or money; if one makes a vow to them and does not keep it, they will not require it. ³⁶They cannot save anyone from death or rescue the weak from the strong. ³⁷They cannot restore sight to the blind; they cannot rescue one who is in distress. ³⁸They cannot take pity on a widow or do good to an orphan. ³⁹These things that are made of wood and overlaid with gold and silver are like stones from the mountain, and those who serve them will be put to shame. ⁴⁰Why then must anyone think that they are Gods, or call them Gods?

Besides, even the Chaldeans themselves dishonor them; for when they see someone who cannot speak, they bring Bel and pray that the mute may speak, as though Bel^k were able to understand! ⁴¹Yet they themselves cannot perceive this and abandon them, for they have no sense. ⁴²And the women, with cords around them, sit along the passageways, burning bran for incense. ⁴³When one of them is led off by one of the passers-by and is taken to bed by him, she derides the woman next to her, because she was not as attractive as herself and her cord was not broken. ⁴⁴Whatever is done for these idols^l is false. Why then must anyone think that they are Gods, or call them Gods?

45 They are made by carpenters and goldsmiths; they can be nothing but what the artisans wish them to be. ⁴⁶Those who make them will certainly not live very long themselves; ⁴⁷how then can the things that are made by them be Gods? They have left only lies and reproach for those who come after. ⁴⁸For when war or calamity comes upon them, the priests consult together as to where they can hide themselves and their Gods.^m ⁴⁹How then can one fail to see that these are not Gods, for they cannot save themselves from war or calamity? ⁵⁰Since they are made of wood and overlaid with gold and silver, it will afterward be known that they are false. ⁵¹It will be manifest to all the nations and kings that they are not Gods but the work of human hands, and that there is no work of God in them. ⁵²Who then can fail to know that they are not Gods?ⁿ

53 For they cannot set up a king over a country or give rain to people. ⁵⁴They cannot judge their own cause or deliver one who is wronged, for they have no power; ⁵⁵they are like crows between heaven and earth. When fire breaks out in a temple of wooden Gods overlaid with gold or silver, their priests will flee and escape, but the Gods^o will be burned up like timbers. ⁵⁶Besides, they can offer no resistance to king or enemy. Why then must anyone admit or think that they are Gods?

57 Gods made of wood and overlaid with silver and gold are unable to save themselves from thieves or robbers. ⁵⁸Anyone who can will strip them of their gold and silver and

of the robes they wear, and go off with this booty, and they will not be able to help themselves. ⁵⁹So it is better to be a king who shows his courage, or a household utensil that serves its owner's need, than to be these false Gods; better even the door of a house that protects its contents, than these false Gods; better also a wooden pillar in a palace, than these false Gods.

60 For sun and moon and stars are bright, and when sent to do a service, they are obedient. ⁶¹So also the lightning, when it flashes, is widely seen; and the wind likewise blows in every land. ⁶²When God commands the clouds to go over the whole world, they carry out his command. ⁶³And the fire sent from above to consume mountains and woods does what it is ordered. But these idols^p are not to be compared with them in appearance or power. ⁶⁴Therefore one must not think that they are Gods, nor call them Gods, for they are not able either to decide a case or to do good to anyone. ⁶⁵Since you know then that they are not Gods, do not fear them.

66 They can neither curse nor bless kings; ⁶⁷they cannot show signs in the heavens for the nations, or shine like the sun or give light like the moon. ⁶⁸The wild animals are better than they are, for they can flee to shelter and help themselves. ⁶⁹So we have no evidence whatever that they are Gods; therefore do not fear them.

70 Like a scarecrow in a cucumber bed, which guards nothing, so are their Gods of wood, overlaid with gold and silver. ⁷¹In the same way, their Gods of wood, overlaid with gold and silver, are like a thornbush in a garden on which every bird perches; or like a corpse thrown out in the darkness. ⁷²From the purple and linen^q that rot upon them you will know that they are not Gods; and they will finally be consumed themselves, and be a reproach in the land. ⁷³Better, therefore, is someone upright who has no idols; such a person will be far above reproach.

FIFTH CHAPTER

Firstly: the objections on the authenticity of the Book

Secondly: books for the same author.

Thirdly: references.

Firstly: Answers to the objections on the Authenticity of the book.

The First Objection:

They say that the book is not like the other books that was used as a reference in the Gospel and the New Testament .For it said that no one from the authors of the New Testament have used the book. That is why the protestant have not included this book in the Bible.

The Answer:

Here we answer that the book of Baruch was part of the book of Jeremiah and completing it till the second century .and to be sure of it and its authenticity:

1. St Paul the apostle use it as a reference in **(1 Corth 1:24) *Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.***

For Baruch the prophet talks about the hidden wisdom, that is hid form the world, and that which was given by God to Israel, he asks the question: **[29] *Who has gone up into heaven, and taken her, and brought her down from the clouds? (Baruch 3:29).***

The answer here is from the mouth of our Lord Jesus that which was given to us through the beloved apostle : **13 *No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.(John 3:13).***

2. The Prophet Baruch when he warns Israel for their sins he says: **[7] *For you provoked him who made you, by sacrificing to demons and not to God. (Baruch 4:7).***

The apostle St Paul repeats the same words warning the Church of Corinthians.

20 Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's Table and of the table of demons. 22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? ((1Corth 10:20-22). Here St Paul uses two verses in the book of Baruch.

3. The prophecy of Baruch: **[36] *He found the whole way to knowledge, and gave her to Jacob his servant and to Israel whom he loved. [37] *Afterward he appeared upon earth and lived among men. (Baruch 3:36).****

We find Baruch is in front of a great revelation in which he sees God appearing on earth and walking among men. This is also explained by St John the beloved: ***And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14).***

He also said : ***That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-- (1 John 1:1).*** So St John did not take the exact words but it follows closely to what was stated in the book of Baruch.

The Second Objection

The book had verses from the psalms :**[17] open thy eyes, O Lord, and see; for the dead who are in Hades, whose spirit has been taken from their bodies, will not ascribe glory or justice to the Lord,(Baruch 2:17).**

The dead do not praise the LORD, Nor any who go down into silence. (Psalms 115:17).

If the book was inspired, then why does it contain exact words that was mentioned in other books?

The Answer:

The scribe of the book is Baruch the son of Neraiah, son of Mahseiah who came after David and after the time on which the Psalms were written, so we do not see any objection in the scribe using the psalms, as we see a lot of verses from the Old Testament being used in the New Testament.

The Third Objection

In the book there was a city by the name of Merran in (Baruch 3:23) **[23] the sons of Hagar, who seek for understanding on the earth, the merchants of Merran and Teman, the story-tellers and the seekers for understanding, have not learned the way to wisdom, nor given thought to her paths.** For it is clear that we did not know about this city before and was not mentioned in any of the Books of the Old Testament.

The Answer:

We response and say that in the same verse (Baruch 3:23) in which the city was mentioned (Merran) there was another city that was mentioned which was the city of Teman and the people of Hagar, so it is very clear that the city of Merran is close to the city of Teman which is to the north of Edom on the hill of Esau to the East of the city of Betra in which the people were well known for their wisdom:

+ 7 **Against Edom. Thus says the LORD of hosts: " Is wisdom no more in Teman? Has counsel perished from the prudent? Has their wisdom vanished? (Jeremiah 49:7).**

+ 9 **Then your mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that everyone from the mountains of Esau May be cut off by slaughter. (Obadiah 9).**

So it is related to the people of Hagar and that is confirmed in the book of Baruch (Ba 3:23) about the people of these two cities that they were " story-tellers and seekers for understanding" that is to say they were of great wisdom exactly as was mentioned in the book of Jeremiah and the book of Obadiah.

The fourth Objection:

Some object that history did not mention anything about the vessels that was retrieved to Jerusalem as mentioned in the book of Baruch 1:8

The answer:

If we look closely to the text we do not find any contradiction as **[8] At the same time, on the tenth day of Sivan, Baruch took the vessels of the house of the Lord, which had been carried away from the temple, to return them to the land of Judah...**

The book mention the word **return** and did not mention **returned** and in verse 10 it mentions that he sent silver to buy the burnt offerings of sin offerings to be offered in the house of the Lord. In verse 14 in the same chapter he mentions that the book was sent to

be read to the people in the house of the Lord and did not mention the vessels that went with the book to return to Judah, as this was one of the failure attempts to retrieve the vessels which was prophesized by in the book of Jeremiah.

Also I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, "Thus says the LORD: 'Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying, 'Behold, the vessels of the Lord's house will now shortly be brought back from Babylon'; for they prophesy a lie to you. 17 Do not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon, and live! Why should this city be laid waste? 18 But if they are prophets, and if the word of the LORD is with them, let them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the LORD, in the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, do not go to Babylon.' 19 'For thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, concerning the Sea, concerning the carts, and concerning the remainder of the vessels that remain in this city, 20 which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon did not take, when he carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem-- 21 yes, thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain in the house of the LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem: 22 'They shall be carried to Babylon, and there they shall be until the day that I visit them,' says the LORD. 'Then I will bring them up and restore them to this place.'" 1 And it happened in the same year, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year and in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, who was from Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of the LORD in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying, 2 "Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying: 'I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. 3 Within two full years I will bring back to this place all the vessels of the Lord's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place and carried to Babylon. 4 And I will bring back to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah who went to Babylon,' says the LORD, 'for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.'" 5 Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and in the presence of all the people who stood in the house of the LORD, 6 and the prophet Jeremiah said, 'Amen! The LORD do so; the LORD perform your words which you have prophesied, to bring back the vessels of the LORD's house and all who were carried away captive, from Babylon to this place. 7 Nevertheless hear now this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people: 8 The prophets who have been before me and before you of old prophesied against many countries and great kingdoms--of war and disaster and pestilence. 9 As for the prophet who prophesies of peace, when the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the LORD has truly sent.'

The Fifth Objection:

Some object the mention of Jehoiakim the priest (Ba 1:7). As this name is not mentioned history till a full century has passed.

The answer:

It was very clear that Nebuchadnezzar used to change names as he changed Metaniah the cousin of Jeconiah the king, as he has done before in changing the name of Pharaoh Necho the king of Egypt from Eliakim to Jehoiakim when his brother Jehoahaz was captive.

31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 32 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. 33 Now Pharaoh Necho put him in prison at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 34 Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Pharaoh took Jehoahaz and went to Egypt, and he died there. (2 Kings 23:31-34).

He also changed Mattaniah to Zedekiah.

Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah. (2 Kings 24:17).

For when Nebuchadnezzar went in the second stage of captivity with the hands of the captain of the guard Nebuzaradan, he killed Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest.

24 The captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. 25 He also took out of the city an officer who had charge of the men of war, seven men of the king's close associates who were found in the city, the principal scribe of the army who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the midst of the city. 26 And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took these and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 27 Then the king of Babylon struck them and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land. (Jer 52:24-27).

Shallum begot Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begot Azariah; 14 Azariah begot Seraiah, and Seraiah begot Jehozadak. 15 Jehozadak went into captivity when the LORD carried Judah and Jerusalem into captivity by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. (1 Chronicles 6:13-14).

We do not know if he has been returned back to Jerusalem or not, and if he has changed his name or took one of his brothers and gave him the name of Jehoiakim instead, for Baruch mentions that he is the son of Hilkiah the son of Shallum. Compare to *and they sent it to Jerusalem to Jehoiakim the high priest, the son of Hilkiah, son of Shallum, and to the priests, and to all the people who were present with him in Jerusalem (Baruch 1:7).*

+ Shallum begot Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begot Azariah; 14 Azariah begot Seraiah, and Seraiah begot Jehozadak (1 Chronicles 6:13).

+ *11 Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the officer over the house of God; (1 Chronicles 9:11).*

+ *Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, was the leader of the house of God. (Nehemiah 11:11).*

These were the objections and their answers.

To this the Lord has helped us.

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Other Books for the Author.

1. The book of Tobit, first edition finished, second edition finished, and currently preparing for the third edition.
- 2 The Book of Judith, the first edition has finished, currently printing the second edition.
- 3 the completion of the book of Daniel the first edition.

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