

SMALL GROUP GUIDE



TO



Schedule:

- Week 1 (Jeremiah): January 18 - 24
- Week 2 (Lamentations): January 25 - 31
- Week 3 (Ezekiel Part 1): February 1 - 7
- Week 4 (Ezekiel Part 2): February 8 -14
- Week 5 (Daniel): February 15 – 21 (Family Day Feb 16)
- Week 6 (Hosea): February 22 - 28

This is a rough schedule for groups to adjust dates as needed.

Small Group Bible Project Companion Guide¹

Note: Suggested Reading Guides attempt to provide you with an overall 'highlight reel'. The readings should not take more than 20 minutes each day. Before you start, invite God to speak into your life through His word as you read. **You are always free to read more and are not required to read the suggested reading to take part in group discussion.** The video clips each week will give a good overview of the book to help everyone understand its part in God's story. **To watch the videos at any point, go to YouTube and search Bible Project Judges (or whichever book you are on that week).**

Week 1 – Jeremiah

Suggested Reading Guide:

Day 1 – Jeremiah 1-2

Day 2 – Jeremiah 7-8

Day 3 – Jeremiah 9-10

Day 4 – Jeremiah 18-19

Day 5 – Jeremiah 20-21

Day 6 – Jeremiah 23 & 25

Day 7 – Jeremiah 29-31

1. Did anything stick out to you, confuse you, or leave you with any question?
2. Read Jeremiah 1:9-10
 - a. God's message for Jeremiah to take to the nations moves from destroying and uprooting to building and planting. When have you experienced the need for God to accomplish this in your life?
 - b. Where do you see the need for God to uproot and replant in our world today?
3. Read Jeremiah 7:5-8, 16-19
 - a. In these verses, God shares with Jeremiah His concerns. What does this tell you about the heart of God and what we ourselves should be concerned with?
4. In John Goldingay's commentary, notes that:

We know from archeological discoveries that as well as making images of Yahweh, people in Israel assumed that Yahweh had a consort. Among the Canaanites and the Assyrians the Queen of Heaven was the wife of a top god. People in Judah thought of Yahweh's consort the same way.²

 - a. What examples do you know of where people assume things about God based on others' beliefs that don't align with who God has revealed Himself to be in the Bible?
 - b. How can we avoid making the same mistakes the people of ancient Israel made?
5. Read Jeremiah 25:15-17
 - a. Where have you heard this language before (Hint: we remember it monthly at church)?
 - b. How does the message to Jeremiah (and the nations) help us understand what Jesus has done on our behalf?
6. Read Jeremiah 31:31-34
 - a. What most encourages you about these verses? Is there anything that confuses you?
7. The video draws out that God says (and did) use Babylon, an evil nation in its own right, to judge the other evil nations (including Israel). What do you make of this? Does this encourage you or concern you? How does it challenge us to place our ultimate trust in God not matter the world event?

¹ *All summary artwork come from Bible Project's resources.

² Goldingay, John. *Jeremiah for Everyone. Old Testament for Everyone*. London: SPCK Publishing, 2015.



Week 2 – Lamentations¹

Suggested Reading Guide:

Day 1 – Lamentations 1

Day 2 – Lamentations 2

Day 3 – Lamentations 3

Day 4 – Lamentations 4

Day 5 – Lamentations 5

Day 6 –

Day 7 –

1. Did anything stick out to you, confuse you, or leave you with any question?
2. The video points out that Lamentations is not alone in its style, offering the author and reader; a form of protest, a way to process emotion, and a place to voice confusion.
 - a. Can you share a time when you have wanted God to hear your protest, emotion or confusion?
3. Read Lamentations 1:8-11
 - a. The author is not hiding the fact that what Israel is experiencing is a result of Israel's action. What would you hope for from God in this situation?
 - b. How have you/do you respond to those you see experiencing the consequences of their actions?
4. Read Lamentations 2:1-3
 - a. Oftentimes, people will focus on one characteristic of God (loving, wrathful, kind, angry). How do we understand God better through these verses when considering 1 John 4:8?
5. Read Lamentations 3:16-26
 - a. Why do you think it is equally important for the author (and us!) to acknowledge our situations and feelings as well as to be reminded of God's promises and character?
 - b. Where have you seen an unhealthy imbalance and its effect (too much focus on situations and feelings or lack of acknowledgment of them)?
6. What do you think our world would look like if people applied their desire for justice in the world upon themselves, or their desire for mercy/freedom for themselves upon the world?
7. Read Lamentations 4:4-5
 - a. There are people who look at the world and think that it is worse than it has ever been. How does the situation described in these verses challenge or reshape that idea?
8. Read Lamentations 5:19-22
 - a. Why might some people find this to be a comforting ending to Lamentations? How would you respond to the author of Lamentations if you were given the chance?

¹ Some early Tradition ascribes authorship of Lamentations to Jeremiah; however, many scholars believe that probably isn't the case based on style and content.

ANONYMOUS
AUTHOR

LAMENTATIONS

LAMENT POEMS IN THE BIBLE:
(See Psalms 10, 63, 64, 74, 75)

- A FORM OF PROTEST
- A WAY TO PROCESS EMOTION
- A PLACE TO VOICE CONFESSION



DESIGN OF THE FIVE POEMS:
A RHYTHMIC ALPHABET (ORT)
1. S (=A) 4. T (=D)
2. B (=B) 5. W (=S)
3. R (=C) 22. N (=T)
21. V (=S)
22. M (=T)

ORDERED &
LINEAR VS DISORDERED
& DYNAMIC
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LAMENT POEMS RESTORE A SACRED DIGNITY TO HUMAN SUFFERING

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Week 3 – Ezekiel Part 1

Suggested Reading Guide:

Day 1 – Ezekiel 1-2

Day 2 – Ezekiel 3-4

Day 3 – Ezekiel 7-8

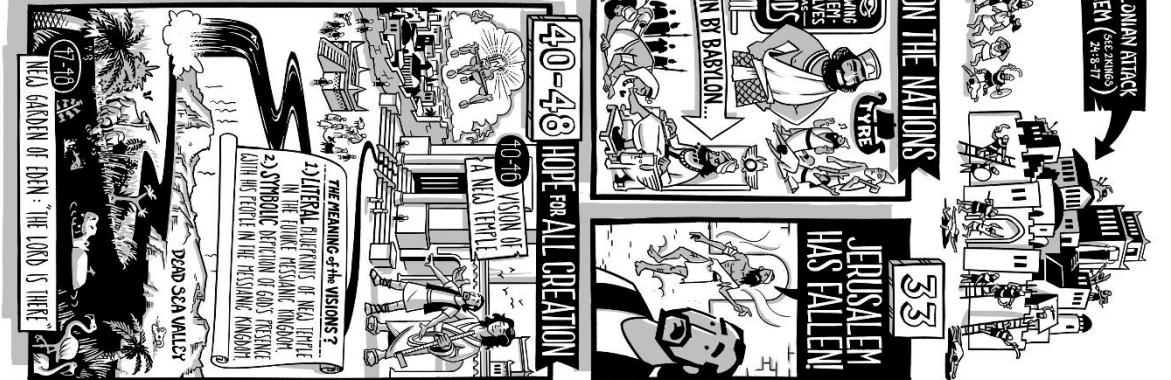
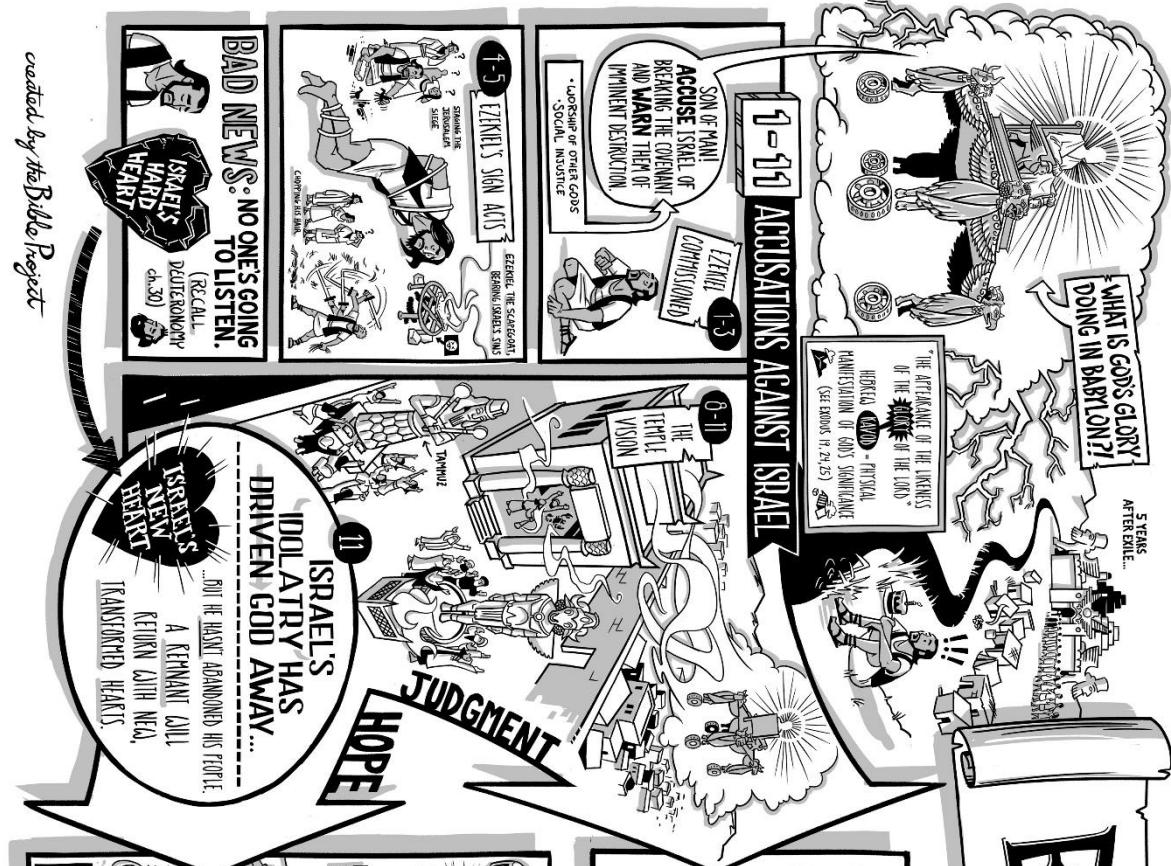
Day 4 – Ezekiel 9-10

Day 5 – Ezekiel 11 & 13

Day 6 – Ezekiel 18 & 20

Day 7 – Ezekiel 22 & 33

1. Did anything stick out to you, confuse you, or leave you with any question?
2. In the year Ezekiel would have been installed as a priest (at the same age Jesus started His ministry ~600 years later – age 30), he finds himself instead as an exile. Ezekiel certainly would have dreamed of the day he would become a true priest of the One True God.
 - a. When have you had one of your dreams shattered (even a dream you thought would have been honouring to God)?
3. Read Ezekiel 4:12-15
 - a. Ezekiel’s response indirectly draws a line of what he doesn’t want to do. Where would you draw the line in following God’s call?
4. Read Ezekiel 8:9-13
 - a. God shows Ezekiel a vision of what is happening inside the temple in Jerusalem. How does verse 12 serve as a warning for us, especially when Paul writes that Christians are “temples of the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 6:19).
5. Read Ezekiel 11:18-21
 - a. What is the one thing that prevents the people from receiving the promise God makes here? How do we see this symptom playing out in the lives of people around us?
6. Read Ezekiel 15:1-6 & John 15:5
 - a. How does Jesus’ statement take on new meaning based on what God said to Ezekiel?
7. Read Ezekiel 33:7
 - a. Where might we be called to be ‘watchmen/women’? How can we ensure that the messages we are saying and listening to are the messages God would have for us?



Week 4 – Ezekiel Part 2

Suggested Reading Guide:

Day 1 – Ezekiel 34-35

Day 2 – Ezekiel 36-37

Day 3 – Ezekiel 38-39

Day 4 – Ezekiel 40-41

Day 5 – Ezekiel 42-43

Day 6 – Ezekiel 44 & 46

Day 7 – Ezekiel 47-48

1. Did anything stick out to you, confuse you, or leave you with any question?
2. Read Ezekiel 34:1-10
 - a. Ezekiel frames political/religious leadership failure as spiritual failure. What assumptions does the chapter make about the relationship between leadership and living in covenant faithfulness with God?
3. Read Ezekiel 36:22
 - a. God's motive for restoring His people in body and in their possessions is plainly stated. What is God's motive and how does that shape our understanding about repentance or merit for restoration?
4. Read Ezekiel 37:1-14
 - a. What roles do God, the prophet, and the bones themselves each play? What does this say about transformation in hopeless situations? What does this say about our role (and what isn't our role)?
5. Read Ezekiel 39:1-4 & 25
 - a. The video points out that Gog is an “archetype of human rebellion”. How does judgment on Gog and restoration of Israel function together, rather than as opposites?
6. Chapters 40-48 depict a new temple and its surroundings. Why do you think Ezekiel devotes nine chapters to architectural, priestly, and territorial detail?
7. Read Ezekiel 47:6-9
 - a. Whether or not Ezekiel speaks of literal blueprints, a symbolic depiction (or both)¹, there exists a repetitive theme of bringing life from death. Where in your life do you long to see life where death seems to have its hold? Where do you see the “dead sea” around you and what would it look like for living water to flow there? Take some time to pray together for this to become reality.

¹ Please avoid debates/arguments or conspiracy type theories that point away from the irrefutable message and towards an attempt to decode the present.

Week 5 – Daniel

Suggested Reading Guide:

Day 1 – Daniel 1-2

Day 2 – Daniel 3-4

Day 3 – Daniel 5-6

Day 4 – Daniel 7

Day 5 – Daniel 8

Day 6 – Daniel 9-10

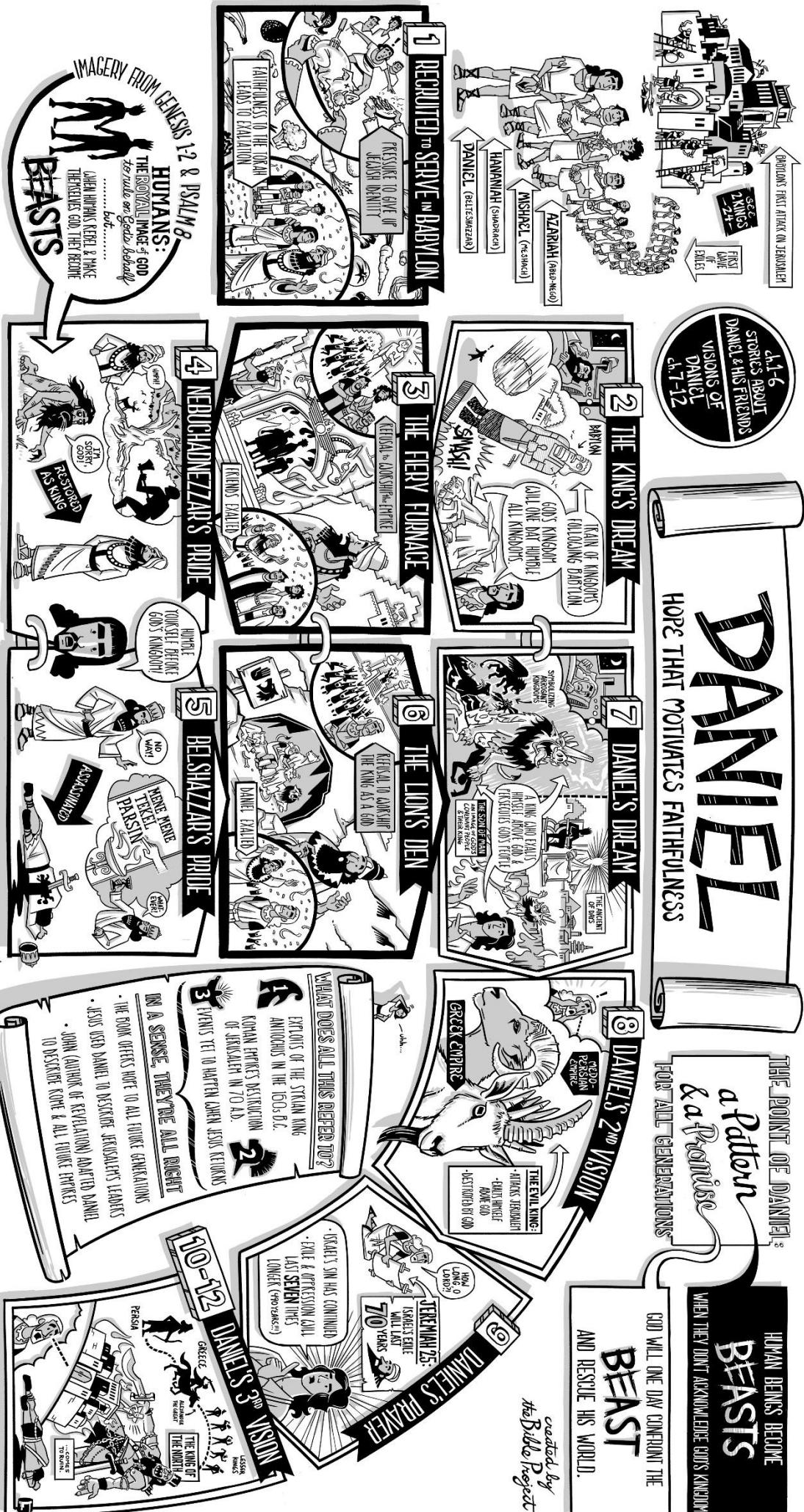
Day 7 – Daniel 11-12

1. Did anything stick out to you, confuse you, or leave you with any questions?
2. Read Daniel 1:8
 - a. Although most Christians do not observe the same dietary restrictions as Daniel, in what ways can followers of Jesus demonstrate a similar resolve by resisting cultural norms that society considers acceptable, but that God identifies as harmful?
3. Read Daniel 2:17-18
 - a. What role does prayer and community play in Daniel's response to the king? How does it play a role in your life?
4. Read Daniel 3:16-18
 - a. How does their statement, "Even if He does not..." shape your understanding of what faith looks like?
5. Read Daniel 5:18-20
 - a. Why is pride so dangerous/wrong and how can humility serve as a safeguard for leaders and Christians alike?
6. Read Daniel 7:11-14
 - a. How does verse 12 seem to be a fitting verse to describe the time in which we now live (from Jesus onward)? How can we get tricked into thinking 'the beast/beasts' have authority when they in fact do not?
7. Daniel's visions give him an overview of events including kingdoms that would rise and fall with God's oversight.
 - a. In what ways did Daniel's visions give faithful Jews hope, and how do they still offer hope to us today? How should we live out this understanding and hope in how we live and talk?

HEBREW

ARAMAIC

HEBREW



Week 6 – Hosea

Suggested Reading Guide:

Day 1 – Hosea 1-2

Day 2 – Hosea 3-4

Day 3 – Hosea 5-6

Day 4 – Hosea 7-8

Day 5 – Hosea 9-10

Day 6 – Hosea 11-12

Day 7 – Hosea 13-14

1. Did anything stick out to you, confuse you, or leave you with any questions?
2. Read Hosea 1:2-3
 - a. What do you make of the Lord's instructions to Hosea?
3. Read Hosea 3:1 and 11:8-11
 - a. How does God use Hosea's relationship to bring deeper understanding to God's own commitment and love to His people? How does the way God speaks about Israel deepen your understanding of God's desire for you?
4. Read Hosea 4:1-2 and 5:4-7
 - a. What sins does God speak of that exist today (perhaps even in our lives) and what lies at its heart (Hint: YADA)? How are these seen as separating people from God and how much more does this emphasize God's love (Romans 5:20)?
5. In Hosea, idolatry is often described as adultery. Why is this metaphor so strong and unsettling?
6. Read Hosea 10:12
 - a. What would/does this look like in our lives and how do we ensure that we do not make the same mistakes of Hosea's contemporaries in performing what seems right yet in a way that displeases God?
7. Read Hosea 14:9
 - a. How does Jesus clarify the ways for us to walk in and how does the Holy Spirit help us to realize this verse in our lives?

