



Handout for week of 12/3/18 Luke 3: 1-6 & Baruch 5: 1-9

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Bar. 5: 1 Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress, put on the beauty of God's glory for evermore, 2 wrap the cloak of God's saving justice around you, put the diadem of the Eternal One's glory on your head, 3 for God means to show your splendor to every nation under heaven, 4 and the name God gives you for evermore will be, 'Peace-through-Justice, and Glory-through-Devotion'. 5 Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east: see your children reassembled from west and east at the Holy One's command, rejoicing because God has remembered. 6 Though they left you on foot driven by enemies, now God brings them back to you, carried gloriously, like a royal throne. 7 For God has decreed the flattening of each high mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk safely in God's glory. 8 And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade for Israel, at God's command; 9 for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory, with the mercy and saving justice which come from him. A copy of the letter which Jeremiah sent to those about to be led captive to Babylon by the king of the Babylonians, to tell them what he had been commanded by God:

COMMENTARY:

The disciple of [Jeremiah](#), and the traditional author of the deuto-canonical book, which bears his name. He was the son of Nerias (Jer. 32:12, 32:16; 36:4, 8, 32; Bar. 1:1), and most probably the brother of Saraias, chief chamberlain to King Sedecias (Jer. 32:12; 51:59; Bar. 1:1). After the temple of Jerusalem had been plundered by [Nebuchadnezzar](#) (599 B.C.), he wrote under the dictation of [Jeremiah](#) the oracle of that great prophet, foretelling the return of the Babylonians, and read them at the risk of his life in the hearing of the Jewish people. He wrote also the second and enlarged edition of the prophecies of [Jeremiah](#) after the first had been burned by the infuriated king, Joachim (Jer. 36). Throughout his life he remained true to the teachings and ideals of the great prophet, although he seems at times to have given way to feelings of despondence, and perhaps even of personal ambition (cf. Jer. 45). He was with [Jeremiah](#) during the last siege of Jerusalem and witnessed the purchase by the prophet of his ancestral estate in Anathoth (Jer. 32). After the fall of the Holy City and the ruin of the Temple (588 B. C.), Baruch lived probably for some time with [Jeremiah](#) at Masphath. His enemies accused him of having prompted the prophet to advise the Jews to remain in Juda, instead of going down into Egypt (Jer. 43), where, according to a Hebrew tradition preserved by St. Jerome (In Isaiah 30:6, 7), both died before [Nebuchadnezzar](#) invaded that country. This tradition, however, conflicts with the data found in the opening chapter of the Prophecy of Baruch, wherein we are told of Baruch writing his book in Babylonia, reading it publicly in the fifth year after the burning of the Holy City, and apparently being sent to Jerusalem by the Jewish captives with sacred vessels and gifts destined to the sacrificial service in Yahweh's Temple. It conflicts likewise with various traditions, both Jewish and [Christian](#), which perhaps contains some particles of truth, but which do not allow us to determine the date, place, or manner of Baruch's death, with anything like probability.