

Follow Up On Questions:

Leprosy (Hansen's disease) is caused by the slow-growing bacteria *Mycobacterium leprae* (and sometimes *M. lepromatosis*). These bacteria have a unique strategy for surviving and damaging the body. These bacteria can enter through the nasal mucosa or respiratory tract. The bacteria are slow-growing and can remain dormant for years, sometimes up to 20 years, before symptoms appear. Instead of attacking immune cells, *M. leprae* infects Schwann cells—the protective sheath cells that wrap around peripheral nerves. These cells provide a safe environment, shielding the bacteria from the immune system.

The infection reprograms Schwann cells into a stem-cell-like state, causing them to multiply abnormally. This creates swelling and pressure around nerve fibers, gradually destroying the nerve tissue. As nerve fibers degenerate, the body loses sensation; especially pain, temperature, and touch in affected skin areas. This loss of nociception means injuries can go unnoticed, leading to ulcers, deformities, and even amputation if untreated.

The earliest visible sign is often a pale or reddened skin patches that are numb. These patches are dry and hairless because nerve damage disrupts sweat glands and hair follicles. In milder forms, there may be a few well-defined patches; in severe forms, widespread nodules, thickened skin, and facial swelling can occur.

Leprosy can also damage the mucous membranes of the nose, eyes, and respiratory tract. In advanced cases, this may cause nasal deformities, vision loss, or chronic sinus issues.

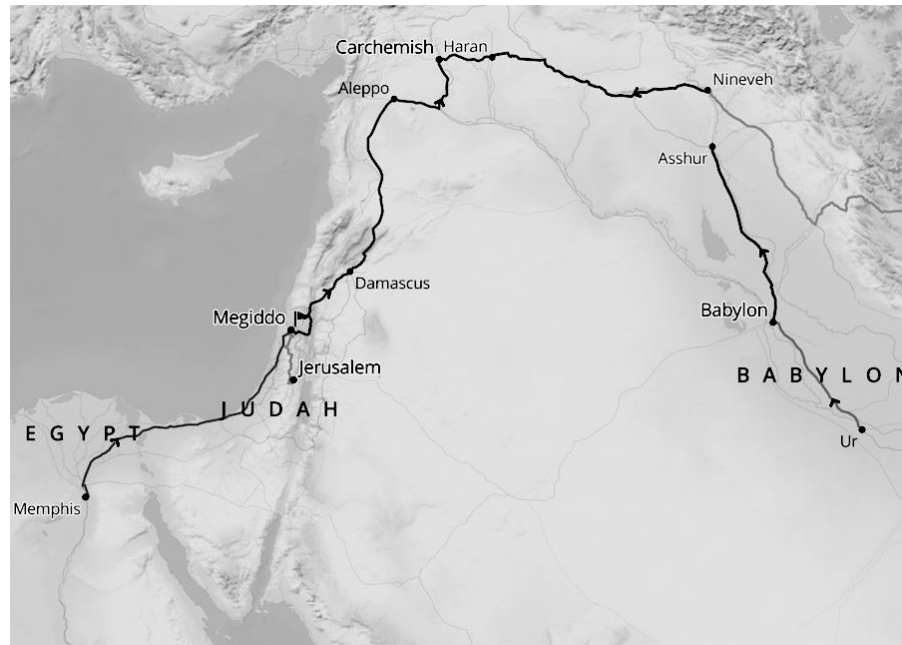
Sulfone drugs treated leprosy by blocking folate synthesis in *Mycobacterium leprae*, stopping the bacteria from multiplying and gradually allowing the immune system to control the infection. In the 1980s, the World Health Organization introduced multidrug therapy (MDT) combining: Dapsone, Rifampicin and Clofazimine. This combination prevented resistance, shortened treatment duration and greatly improved cure rates. MDT remains the global standard today.

Structure and Content Differences

- **Matthew** includes:
 - Warnings against false messiahs (24:4–5; 24:23–28).
 - The “abomination of desolation” (24:15–20) and the Great Tribulation (24:21–22).
 - The parable of the fig tree (24:32–33) and certainty of the end (24:34–35).
 - The “surprise day of judgment” (24:36–41) and call to be alert (24:42–44).
- **Luke** includes:
 - A detailed account of the siege of Jerusalem (21:20–24).
 - The “abomination of desolation” (21:20) and the need to flee (21:20–21).
 - The parable of the fig tree (21:29–31) and certainty of the end (21:32–33).
 - The “surprise day of judgment” (17:26–37) and call to be alert (21:34–36).

Note: 720-701 BC Assyria captured more than 200,000 people from the Northern Tribes of Israel. Included in that was all of Samaria.

1st wave 605 BCE First deportation; Judeans, Nobility, Youths such as Daniel taken. Approximately 30,000 People taken to Babylon.



2nd wave 597 BCE Jerusalem captured; Jehoiachin, Ezekiel, 14-18,000 others taken.

3rd wave 586 BCE Jerusalem destroyed; Zedekiah final deportation, at least 4,600 taken.

Where did Ezekiel Prophesy? In Babylonian Exile!

Ezekiel 1: 1-3 (NASB 2020)

Now it came about in the thirtieth year, on the fifth *day* of the fourth month, while I was by the river Chebar among the exiles, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. ² (On the fifth of the month in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile, ³ the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and there the hand of the Lord came upon him.)

Ezekiel 23:4 (NASB 2020)

Their names were Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister. And they became Mine, and they gave birth to sons and daughters. And *as for* their names, Samaria is Oholah and Jerusalem is Oholibah.

Jeremiah 3: 6–11 (NASB 2020)

Then the Lord said to me in the days of King Josiah, "Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every leafy tree, and she prostituted herself there. ⁷ Yet I thought, 'After she has done all these things she will return to Me'; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. ⁸ And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a certificate of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and prostituted herself also. ⁹ And because of the thoughtlessness of her prostitution, she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees. ¹⁰ Yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in deception," declares the Lord. ¹¹ And the Lord said to me, "Faithless Israel has proved herself to be more righteous than treacherous Judah.

