

Exton Two Day Study  
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## JEREMIAH

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## ETDS 2015—JEREMIAH

**Jeremiah, an Introduction***Michael J. White****Jeremiah, the Man, the Author of the Book*****GENERAL*****His Life***

1. Jeremiah – *Jah or Yah Exalts* (variously rendered, but seems to come from root that means to raise, extol or exalt).
2. A Levite, the son of Hilkiah, a Priest, of Anathoth, a city of the Levites in the territory of Benjamin, a short distance N/NE of Jerusalem.
3. He was ordained at conception (1:5), may have been called to his mission at an extremely young age (1:6, the word he uses to refer to himself indicates a young age), and worked for at least 40 years (1:2-3), ca. 627 – 586 BC.
4. Jeremiah has been described by some as frightened, timid, even vacillating. While that may aptly describe initial reaction (or periodic reluctance), nonetheless he persevered and must be considered a strong and brave warrior! No one may doubt his love and reverence for the Lord or his willingness to obey even the hardest and seemingly unfair commands given to him by the Lord. Though there were times when he did not want to keep doing what he had to do, he did it; he did not forsake his call. He may be fairly described as softhearted, often breaking forth in tears because of all the suffering coming upon his people. In similar fashion, Jesus wept. That certainly does not convey weakness! He wanted salvation, deliverance for his people rather than destruction. Paul would likewise say he could wish himself accursed for the same thing. This is the strength of love. Interestingly, when asked by Jesus, *Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?* the disciples responded that *some say You are Jeremiah!* (Matthew 16:13-14).
5. Jeremiah was assisted by **Baruch ben Neriah** – scribe, amanuensis, disciple and friend (32, 36, 43). According to Josephus, he was a Jewish aristocrat, a son of Neriah and brother of Seraiah ben Neriah, chamberlain of King Zedekiah of Judah (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* X, ix.1). For his devotion, he tended to suffer the same fate as Jeremiah.

***His Death***

The end of Jeremiah's life is not recorded for us. It is generally presumed Jeremiah spent the end of his life in Egypt and died there; yet, there is no definitive record of his death.

Several traditions do surround the end of his life, however. C. F. Keil records Jerome, Tertullian and Epiphanius to say he was stoned by the people at Tahpanhes (Daphne) after being taken to Egypt (43:1ff), and that his grave was at one time known and pointed out near Cairo. Additionally, Epiphanius, (*The Lives of the Prophets*) says that Alexander the Great later transferred his remains to Alexandria. He also notes another Jewish tradition (*Seder Olam Rabbah* c. 26) which says he was

carried to Babylon with Baruch by Nebuchadnezzar at the conquest of Egypt, in the 27<sup>th</sup> year of his reign (Keil and Delitzsch, p. 17).

## ***HIS WORK***

### ***A Prophet of God***

1. By description, *The Word of the Lord came unto [him]...and he was ordained [by God] a prophet of the nations. Then the Lord put forth His hand, and touched [his] mouth...and said, I have put My Words in your mouth. See, the Lord said, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant (1:4-5, 9-10).* One may clearly see the pronouncement of doom as well as the future hope in his message from his very appointment. Traditionally he is ranked among the “Major Prophets” of the Old Testament.
2. Jeremiah was ordered by God to prepare himself. He was to develop the necessary characteristics to do his work (cf. 1:17ff) – courage; resolve; steadfastness; fidelity. Further, he was to divide from his people and not to turn to them again (1:18; 15:19). He was not to marry or have children (16:2). Nor was he to fraternize with his people, e.g., not even to attend wedding-feasts or funerals (16:5, 8).
3. Regarding his personality, work and language, Jeremiah has often been compared to both Moses and Jesus.
  - a. Like Moses, he resisted the call from God and offered similar excuses (1:6ff; Exodus 3-4). Both could sharply rebuke, yet love and plead for their people. In Jewish rabbinic literature, their life and work is often paralleled. For example, an ancient *midrash* commenting on Deuteronomy 18:18, in which “a prophet like [Moses]” is promised: *As Moses was a prophet for forty years, so was Jeremiah; as Moses prophesied concerning Judah and Benjamin, so did Jeremiah; as Moses’ own tribe [fellow Levites] rose up against him, so did Jeremiah’s fellow Levites revolt against him; Moses was cast into the water, Jeremiah into a pit; Moses was saved by a slave (the slave of Pharaoh’s daughter); so, Jeremiah was rescued by a slave (Ebed-Melech); Moses reprimanded the people in discourses; so did Jeremiah.* (The Aggadah, Pesikta de-RaB Kahana, ed. Buber, xiii. 112a).
  - b. Like Jesus, he wept over Jerusalem and predicted its fall. Both condemned the practices at the temple in their day and foretold its destruction. They were both accused of treason; suffered persecution, and were tried and punished for the message they preached. Both made frequent use of nature and metaphors in their teachings. Both specifically indicted the priests of their day. Both experienced extreme rejection, even by those close to them. Both were tenderhearted, men of sorrows; both experiencing the loneliness accompanying their position. Both were well aware of having been born to their purpose.

### ***The Nature of His Message***

1. Jeremiah 23:29, “Are not all my Words as fire, saith the LORD, and a hammer that shatters rock,” establishes the tone of his message.
2. Jeremiah’s message was predictive of the doom that was coming to his people. The Lord gave him the unenviable task of preaching an unpopular message to them ➔ *He announced that Jerusalem would be given into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar (32:28), who would ‘break the bones’ of Israel (50:17). His bold declarations that the force coming from the north (Babylon; 1:13-15; 4:6; 6:1; 20:4; 25:9-12) would destroy his own nation caused him to be labeled a traitor, worthy*

of death (26:7-13; 37:12-16). – Dayton Keese, *Truth for Today Commentary, Jeremiah 1-25* (Searcy, AR: Resource Publications, 2011), p. 3.

3. He could be described as somewhat of an itinerant preacher, going wherever God directed him to preach – condemning idolatry (3:12-23; 4:1-4); greed (6:13-14; 8:10); false prophecy and teaching (5:31; 14:13-16); and the immorality of those around him, be they commoner, family, priest or king (cf. 2 Timothy 4:1-5). His prophecies were delivered to everyone from individual (39:15-18) to international power (51:59-64); from the temple (gate, 7:2; court, 26:2); the court of the prison of the king's house (32:2-3; 33:1; 37:21); a potter's house (18:2ff); and, the Valley of the Son of Hinnom (19:2).

4. Other common themes in the Book than the primary one of the impending doom and captivity of his people; are their return and ultimate redemption, including the future Messiah. Lastly, he is well-known for his own personal grief. Jeremiah was sent by God to give prophesy of Jerusalem's destruction that would occur by invaders from the North because they had violated their Covenant with God. They were going to suffer, endure the destruction of their capital city and temple, and be totally dispossessed of their land when exiled into captivity in Babylon. He was not unfeeling in response to all this.

### ***Reception of His Message***

To say he or his message was not well-received would be an understatement. There was abject rejection of both! They refused to hear him (6:16-17); and reacted with ridicule, verbally attacking him (18:18; word for *strike* is severe term for *injure*, even *murder*). Further, they attacked his personal character (traitor – allied with the Chaldeans, 37:13; liar – God did not send you, 43:2). The abuse turned physical (they beat and imprisoned him, 20:2; 37:15 [same word in both as 18:18]; and threw him into the *cistern or pit* that was in the *court of the dungeon, prison*, 38:6). His abuse escalated as they threatened his life (11:19; 18:23; 26:8-11; 38:4, 15).

### ***Personal Affect on Jeremiah***

1. He is known as the “Weeping Prophet” and that in itself summarizes the point. He is so called because of all the sacrifice and personal difficulties he suffered doing the work of God, illustrated by numerous Passages in the Books of Jeremiah and Lamentations. Through forty years he proclaimed the Word of God among his people and it took its toll on him.

2. Periodically, Jeremiah just breaks forth in pain because of it all:

a. 4:19-20 † *My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace...suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment.*

b. 8:18 † *I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint in me.*

c. 10:19 † *Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it.*

d. 13:17 † *If ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive.*

e. 15:17b-18 † *I sat alone because of Thy hand: for Thou hast filled me with indignation. Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed?*

f. Lamentations 1:16 † *For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me...*

g. 2:11 † *Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people...*

h. 3:1-20, 48-54 † *I am the man that hath seen affliction...*

- i. Perhaps nothing stronger than 20:7-9 † *You have deceived* (persuaded, but see 1 Kings 22) *me, and I was deceived; You are stronger than I and have prevailed; I am in derision daily, everyone mocks me. For since I spoke, I cried out, Violence and destruction! Because the Word of the Lord has been a reproach unto me and a derision daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His Name; but His Word was in my heart like a burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I was weary of holding back, and I could not...*
3. He was in despair over the message, the lack of reception, and the reaction from his people. In similar fashion to Job, he *cursed the day he was born* (20:14-18; 15:10; cp. Job 3:3-10). *Does anyone have sorrow like mine?* (Lamentations 1:12), he pleaded.
4. He longed for vengeance from God (11:20; 20:12; 15:15) – *Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are they all happy that deal very treacherously? ...Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter* (12:1-3).
5. He loved and deeply hurt for his people even though they so disgusted him he longed to be able to just leave them (8:20-9:2).

## *The Historical Setting of the Book of Jeremiah*

### **THE POLITICAL CLIMATE**

#### **Major Upheaval**

1. The political climate during Jeremiah's day was one of major upheaval and multi-generational change.
  - a. The dominant power at his birth and call was **Assyria**. However, having returned to their old ways, forsaking the repentance that had come at Jonah's pronouncement, the Assyrian Empire was coming to an end.
  - b. The resurgence of the Chaldean people in the southern regions of Mesopotamia would result in a Neo-**Babylonian** Empire.
  - c. Alliances that were developing between several nations to the East of Assyria, would give rise to Medo-**Persian** empire (Persian Empire) in the not too distant future, spelling the demise of the once and current Babylonian empire.
  - d. Ancient **Egypt** was being subjugated and entering its "late period," thus being reduced to virtually no more than a *vassal kingdom* to whomever was in power (the Assyrians and the Babylonians in Jeremiah's day). It would never return to its former glory, continuing to be dominated by someone for the remainder of their history.
  - e. **Judah** had witnessed the northern ten tribes of God's people being carried off by Assyria 150 years before. Their *dispersion* continued with the deportation of captives to the lands of Babylon. They would not only go away into captivity, but even with a return would never quite be the same. There would be a change in both the political (with David's line "written childless") and the Spiritual leadership (the high priest's position gaining power, reducing that of the line of David). Civil wars, foreign powers, etc. all exasperated what began in Jeremiah's time.
  - f. The doom of many other surrounding nations would also be sealed in the turmoil. Some had been perennial enemies, some were even distant relatives, and some were current and rising powers.

2. The presence in that part of the world of an ever-expanding empire begins with Babylon, followed by the Persians, Grecians and finally the Romans. Diminishing in political significance, Judah would grow further away from the political greatness they experienced in the days of David and Solomon.

## ***THE HISTORICAL SETTING***

### ***At the Time of Jeremiah's Call and Early Work***

1. When Jeremiah began his work as the prophet of God, Judah had experienced the great idolatry of the times of Manasseh and Amon but was well into the time of the reign of Josiah. Josiah valiantly tried to remove idolatry and reform the land of Judah, but the heart of the people was given to it. Jeremiah began to prophesy in the 13<sup>th</sup> year of his reign. For nearly twenty years, then, under the reign of a good king, Jeremiah prophesied of the impending doom coming to their people.
2. Assyria
  - a. The Assyrian Empire had existed independently for approximately 1900 years (ca. 2500 to 605 BC, Nineveh fell in 612). Their end was facilitated through a number of rebellions, civil wars, etc. Thereafter they would continue as a geo-political region, ethnic entity and colonized province until the late 7<sup>th</sup> c. AD, ruled by whatever foreign power was in control, but never again would they return to dominance.
  - b. Successful campaigns under Esarhaddon (681-669 BC) had reestablished Assyria as the great power in the area. Notably, he completely rebuilt Babylon during his reign, bringing peace to Mesopotamia. The Babylonians, Egyptians, Elamites, Cimmerians, Scythians, Persians, Medes, Arameans, Chaldeans, Judeans, Phoenicians and others were all united as vassals under his rule.
  - c. Ashurbanipal (669-627 BC) succeeded him, sustaining and even expanding the Assyrian domination throughout the area. He successfully squelched major attempts at rebellion by the Egyptians in the 660's as well as the Medes and Persians in the 650's. His expanse of the empire created perhaps the largest empire the world had known, from the Caucasus in the north to beyond Egypt in the south, from as far as Lydia in western Turkey to the lands of Media, Persia, Elam, etc. to the east.
  - d. The empire really began to crumble, though, after a bloody civil war in 652. His brother, ruling from Babylon under him, united a number of peoples resentful of Assyria's supremacy. These included various Chaldean and Aramaean tribes to the south, various nations to the north and even Elam and peoples to the east. The initial attempt was unsuccessful, but the empire had been weakened, and successive attempts left it drained of wealth and manpower, and local areas ravaged. With the death of Ashurbanipal in 627 (ca. 13<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah's reign and the beginning of Jeremiah's tenure), they were left without a strong enough leader to avoid the inevitable.
3. Babylon
  - a. An ancient city, Babylon first emerged as a superpower in the days of Hammurabi (18<sup>th</sup> c. BC) and it is estimated to have become the largest city in the world at the time. After his death, it came under the control of the Assyrians.
  - b. As the time of Jeremiah drew near, Babylon was reemerging as a powerful political center. The Chaldean chieftain, Merodach-Baladan, allied with the Elamites and began to revolt against Assyria during the reign of Sennacherib (705-681 BC). This resulted in the utter destruction of Babylon in 689. Esarhaddon quickly rebuilt it, placing his son, Shamash-

shum-ukin in power. He subsequently allied himself with Elam and others against his brother, Ashurbanipal, which brought the aforementioned civil war in 652 BC.

c. Amidst the weakness in Assyria following the death of Ashurbanipal in 627, Nabopolassar (658-605 BC), a relatively unknown Chaldean from southeastern Mesopotamia, began to emerge as the power in Babylon. By 626, as Jeremiah was just beginning his ministry in Judah, Nabopolassar had established independence from Assyria and begun to rule in the city of Babylon. He would spend the time of his reign uniting the surrounding nations under his rule, while putting down various revolts against it. In a major revolt during 609, against the Assyrians and the Egyptians under Pharaoh Necho II, King Josiah was killed. With the military leadership provided by his son, Nebuchadnezzar, all attempts against him failed, and the last of the Assyrian and Egyptian forces were conquered at the Battle of Carchemish in 605. Nabopolassar is credited with founding the Neo-Babylonian Empire and he would rule until his death by natural causes shortly thereafter in 605. He was then succeeded by Nebuchadnezzar.

#### 4. Egypt

Ancient **Egypt** entered its “late period” in the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century and, with its subjugation to Assyria, was virtually reduced to being a *vassal state* (to the Assyrians first and later the Babylonians). Pharaoh Necho I became one of Esarhaddon’s vassals following his defeat by the Assyrians in the 660’s. Egypt did enjoy a reunification and independence under Psamtik I during the time of Assyria’s civil unrest. His son, Necho II, came to power in 610 BC, after his father’s fifty-four year reign. Civil unrest in Assyria had given way to a strong Babylonian power, however, which threatened Egypt yet again. An alliance with the remnants of Assyria did not help their cause against Nebuchadnezzar. Once again Egypt was a vassal state.

5. Josiah reigned in Judah for thirty-one years beginning in 640 BC. The closer his tenure drew to a close, the more the political climate shifted. He witnessed the weakening of Assyria and the rise of Babylon. He saw the death of Psamtik I and Egypt slipping once again. He witnessed Egypt’s opposition of Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar. Unfortunately, Josiah joined the conflict and opposed Pharaoh Necho II at Megiddo. His decision was fatal. The year was 609. Jeremiah was nearly halfway through the time of his work. Everything was quickly and radically changing.

### ***At the Time of Jeremiah’s Later Work***

1. Nation after nation tumbled under the campaigns of Nebuchadnezzar. All around them Judah watched old enemies, former allies, and national powers of various strengths fall one by one. No one could resist his advance. Meanwhile Jeremiah continued to predict Judah’s doom at his hands.

2. During the Reign of Jehoahaz (Shallum, Joahaz) ca. 609 (3 months)

Jehoahaz was an evil king, following in the steps of his grandfather and those before him, disregarding the reforms of his father, Josiah, and the counsel of Jeremiah. Pharaoh Necho II took him captive (Jeremiah 22:10-13) and imprisoned him (2 Kings 23:31-33). He was *never to return or see his native country again*.

3. During the Reign of Eliakim (Jehoiakim) ca. 609-598 (11 years)

When Necho II deposed Jehoahaz, he put his brother, Eliakim, on the throne, changing his name to Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:34-24:6). Like his brother, he was very evil, following in the steps of his forefathers. He was murderous, unscrupulous, and Rabbinical literature even portrays him as incestuous.

a. In his fourth year, he demonstrated his lack of respect for Jeremiah or the Word of God (Jeremiah 36). The Lord instructed Jeremiah to write down all the Words He had spoken

- through him *from the days of Josiah even unto this day* to see if Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin (:2-3). Jehoiakim showed his contempt the next year by cutting it up and burning it (:23). God had the Word rewritten (:27-32), adding the prophecy that Nebuchadnezzar would be coming for him!
- b. Nebuchadnezzar utterly defeated the combined Assyrian and Egyptian forces at the Battle of Carchemish in 605 during Jehoiakim's reign and Judah came completely under Babylon's control. Nebuchadnezzar took plunder and captives, including Daniel (1:2-4). Jehoiakim became a vassal to Nebuchadnezzar.
  - c. However, during attempts at rebellion by various Egyptian, Phoenician and Canaanite states, Jehoiakim vacillated in his allegiance, incurring the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:1). In late 598, Nebuchadnezzar would again besiege Jerusalem for 3 months. Before it ended Jehoiakim died. His body was disposed of like a dead donkey (Jeremiah 36:30; 22:18-19) outside the gates of Jerusalem with no one mourning him.
4. During the Reign of Jehoiachin (Jeconiah, Coniah) ca. 598-597 (3 months); and Zedekiah (Mattaniah) ca. 597-586 BC (11 years)
    - a. Nebuchadnezzar was now secure in his power and Babylon was unquestionably the area's supreme power. The predictions of Jeremiah and his contemporaries had come to pass.
    - b. Thereupon Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin, became king (2 Kings 24:6-17). In his short reign as king (2 Chronicles 36:9), with all the judgment of God being executed around him, he too was evil like his predecessors. Nebuchadnezzar deported thousands of Jews to Babylon, including Jehoiachin in 597 BC (2 Kings 24:15-16). Ezekiel was apparently taken also in this deportation (Ezekiel 1:1-3).
    - c. Jeremiah delivered a major prophecy during Jehoiachin's time, forever amending the Davidic Covenant (22:24-30). *O earth, earth, earth, hear the Word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.*
    - d. After Jehoiachin was deposed, his uncle, Zedekiah (Jehoiakim's brother), was placed on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:17) and would reign eleven years (:18). He too *did evil in the sight of the Lord* like his brother, Jehoiakim (:19; Jeremiah 52:1-2). He was neither a man of strength nor wisdom. When he foolishly opposed Nebuchadnezzar, he paid dearly. Not only did he witness yet another siege and the fall of Jerusalem in 586 (39:1-10; 52:4-5), the last thing he saw was the execution of his sons in retaliation for his mistake – then his eyes were put out (:6-11).
    - e. That the Jews still regarded David's descendent, Jehoiachin, to have legitimate right to the throne, however, is probably evidenced by Hananiah's "prophecy" that he would return when the Lord *broke the yoke of the king of Babylon* (Jeremiah 28:1-4).
    - f. Jehoiachin remained imprisoned in Babylon for thirty-seven years (Jeremiah 22:20-30; 27:20; 29:2) before receiving better treatment from Nebuchadnezzar's successor in 562, Amel-Marduk (Evil-Merodach, 2 Kings 25:27-30).
  5. During the Governorship of Gedaliah
 

Following the utter destruction of 586 (Jeremiah 52:12-30), *some of the poor of the land were left to be vinedressers and farmers* (2 Kings 25:12) and Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, was appointed as "governor" over them (:22-23; Jeremiah 40:7). He apparently intended to *serve the king of Babylon* and urged the people to do so (:8-10), but an evil conspiracy by Ishmael



resulted in his assassination (41:1ff). The perpetrators then fled to Egypt, fearing vengeance from Nebuchadnezzar (:17-18).

### ***Following the Work of Jeremiah***

1. Despite the final words of Jeremiah, the remnant left in Judah also fled to Egypt (42-43). The Book of Jeremiah closes with most of his nation having been deported to Babylon and the rest having fled to Egypt. The land of Judah was desolate.
2. Nebuchadnezzar enjoyed the fruits of his conquests. His pride caused one of the stranger events in the Bible (Daniel 4), yet God fulfilled His predictions and preserved his kingdom. Judah remained in captivity for the full seventy years.
3. The Middle East was somewhat quiet, but growing unrest and a rising alliance to the East would result in Babylon's own demise.

## ***The Structure of the Book of Jeremiah***

### **GENERAL**

#### ***Time and Date of Writing***

Jeremiah covers a span of approximately 40 years (ca. 627 – 586 BC), from the 13<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of King Josiah through those of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. He may carry on in some capacity with the remnant in Egypt following Jerusalem's destruction, but that is not specified.

#### ***Audience***

He primarily addressed the Jews in Judah, whom he described as a stubborn, impudent, rebellious, and impenitent people – a people *slidden back by a perpetual backsliding who hold fast deceit and refuse to return* (8:5).

A people to whom Jeremiah emphasized the Law of God and often called them back, imploring them to *ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein* (6:16).

### **COMPOSITION**

#### ***Language***

1. The Book is written in Hebrew in a complex and poetic style.
2. Exception

a. Jeremiah 10:11 is written in Aramaic, the language of the Babylonians of the time.

Questions naturally arise, but the following explanation seems plausible...

*This [statement] declares that all that has been spoken of idols in this chapter, was to arm the Jews when they would be in Chaldea among the idolaters, and now with one sentence he instructs them both how to protest their own religion against the idolaters and how to answer them to their shame who would exhort them to idolatry, and therefore he writes this sentence in the Chaldean tongue for a memorial while all the rest of his writing is in Hebrew. (1599 Geneva Bible Notes)*

b. Note: Since the introductory remark by Jeremiah in the verse is itself in Aramaic, some suppose that it is a later marginal insertion into the text by a post-exilic scribe. There seems to be no clear evidence for that, however.

### ***Elements of Style***

1. The Book contains quite a number of metaphors:
  - a. Animals (lion, leopard, camel, donkey, horse, various birds, fish, snake, jackal, lamb, ox)
  - b. Plants (vine, grapes, figs, fruit, trees)
  - c. Weather (wind, whirlwind, snow, rain, drought)
  - d. Agriculture (plowing, sowing, reaping)
2. The Book also employs a number of other symbols for illustration (Note: some of these have led to severe criticism by modernists):
  - a. Boiling Pot
  - b. Linen "Girdle" (*band, sash, belt*)
  - c. Fountain of Living Waters and Broken Cisterns
  - d. Jugs of Wine, Cup of Wine
  - e. Potter and Earthenware
  - f. Foundry, Bellows, Metals, etc.
  - g. Yoke
  - h. Purchased Plot of Ground
  - i. Washing with Nitre (potash) and Much Soap
  - j. Large Stones
  - k. Scroll
  - l. Fortified Bronze Wall
3. Jeremiah also uses repetition of phrases to make his points:
  - a. 1:18-19; 15:20 ➔ *I have made you a brazen wall, fortified...the people shall fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you; for, I am with you, says the Lord, and I will deliver you...*
  - b. 2:28; 11:13 ➔ *according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah...*
  - c. 5:9, 29; 9:9 ➔ *Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*
  - d. 6:13-15; 8:10-12 ➔ *For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.*
  - e. 6:22-24; 50:41-43 ➔ *Behold, a people shall come from the north...and a great nation shall be raised up from the sides [coasts;quarters] of the earth. They shall ... hold the bow and the lance: they are cruel, and will not show mercy: their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, set in array as men for battle, against thee, O daughter of Zion [Babylon, 50:42]. We [The king of Babylon, 50:43] hath heard the report thereof, and our [his;:43] hands grow feeble: anguish has taken hold took hold of us [him, :43], and pain as of a woman in travail.*
  - f. 7:14; 26:6 ➔ *Therefore will I do unto[make, :6] this house...as I have done to [like, :6] Shiloh...*

- g. 7:31-33; 19:5-7; cp. 32:35 ➔ *They have built the high places of Tophet [Baal, :5], which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire [to Baal, :5]; which I commanded them not, neither came it into My heart. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it [this place, :6] shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter...And the [their, :7] carcasses ... shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth...*
- h. 10:12-16; 51:15-19 ➔ *He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion. When He uttereth His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures. Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.*
- i. 11:20; 20:12 ➔ *But, O LORD of hosts, that judgest righteously [triest the righteous, :12], that triest the reins and the heart, let me see Thy vengeance on them: for unto Thee have I revealed my cause.*
- j. 15:2; 43:11 ➔ *Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword ...and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity [sword and captivity phrases reversed in 43:11]...*
- k. 16:14-15; 23:7-8 ➔ *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither He [I, :8] had driven them; and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers [they shall dwell in their own land, :8].*
- l. 17:25; 22:4 ➔ *Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings ... sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they [he, :4], and their princes [servants, :4], the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem [and his people, :4] ...*
- m. 23:19-20; 30:23-24 ➔ *Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous [continuing, :23] whirlwind; it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. The anger [fierce anger, :24] of the LORD shall not return, until He have executed, and till He have performed the thoughts of His heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it...*
- n. 30:11; 46:28 ➔ *For I am with thee, saith the LORD ... I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered [driven, :28] thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.*
- o. And,
- 1) 31:35-36 is fairly similar to 33:25, 26
  - 2) 52:1-34 parallels greatly 2 Kings 24:18–25.30

4. Jeremiah is a Book of predictions (approximately 60% of the Book) covering the fall of Jerusalem, by Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar, who before being conquered themselves would defeat various specified surrounding nations, resulting in 70 years of captivity for Judah, followed by their return, restoration and redemption.
5. Regardless of particular content, Jeremiah repeatedly ensured his audience, *Thus saith the Lord* what you read!

### **Basic Outline of the Book**

1. Proposing a definitive structural outline for Jeremiah is difficult. It is generally accepted that the Book does not follow any strict chronological sequence (Its own dating of various chapters

easily demonstrates that). In the strictest sense it may be said not to follow any real arrangement by subject matter, addresses, forms (discourses, prophecies, etc.) It is, simply, a collection of writings – discourses, sermons, introspections, judgments, prophecies, letters, prayers, lamentations, etc.

2. Sometimes one sees tonal differences between the earlier versus the later writings (i.e. that there is more resolve, less complaint, on the part of Jeremiah), yet there is no real departure in the subject matter to be seen throughout.

3. Suggested Outlines:

1) C. F. Keil, Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 8, *Jeremiah, Lamentations* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.), pp. 21-25

Introduction (Ch. 1)

Section One: Six Discourses of Jeremiah (Ch. 2-20)

2:1-3:5; 3:6-6:30; 7-10; 11-13; 14-17; 18-20

Section Two: Two Main Predictions (Ch. 21-33)

Judgment and Captivity (21-29)

Messiah, Redemption (30-33)

Section Three: Various Prophecies (Ch. 34-45)

Utterances During the Reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah (34-36)

Counsels During the Final Siege by Babylon (37-39)

Following the Siege (40-45)

Section Four: Prophecies Against the Foreign Nations (Ch. 46-51)

Conclusion (Ch. 52)

Summation of the Fall of Jerusalem and Babylonian Captivity

2) J.A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), pp. 125-130.

Jeremiah's Call and Two Visions (Ch. 1)

God's Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem (Ch. 2-25)

Jeremiah's Controversy with False Prophets (Ch. 26-29)

The "Book of Consolation" (Ch. 30-33)

Incidents from the Days of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah (34-39)

Jeremiah's Experiences After the Fall of Jerusalem (40-45)

Oracles Against the Nations (Ch. 46-51)

Review of the Fall of Jerusalem (Ch. 52)

3) Michael D. Coogan, *A Brief Introduction to the Old Testament: The Hebrew Bible in Its Context*. Oxford University Press, p. 299.

Chapters 1–25 (The earliest and main core of Jeremiah's message)

Chapters 26–29 (Biographic material and interaction with other prophets)

Chapters 30–33 (God's promise of restoration including Jeremiah's "new covenant")

Chapters 34–45 (Mostly interaction with Zedekiah and the fall of Jerusalem)

Chapters 46–51 (Divine punishment to the nations surrounding Israel)

Chapter 52 (Appendix that retells 2 Kings 24.18–25.30)

## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### ***Comparison to the Book of Ezekiel***

1. Jeremiah was a contemporary of both Ezekiel and Daniel. Yet, though there is a general

overlapping of the three, Daniel varies widely from Jeremiah and Ezekiel re point of view, subject matter, etc. Perhaps one might note the extreme difference in Daniel's circumstances compared with those of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Daniel gained position in Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar took notice of his skills and he interpreted the king's dream (Chapters 1-2). Daniel continued to enjoy prominence (for the most part) for the remainder of his life.

Such was not the case with either Jeremiah or Ezekiel. Both men prophesied in the midst of the harsh realities of Judah's disobedience and punishment, Jeremiah in Judah and Ezekiel in captivity in Babylon during the middle years of Jeremiah's work. Both address the people and their leaders without favorable attention. Hence, a number of similarities occur between the writings of these two. Though differences can easily be cited, the content and tone of their message is strikingly similar. Even specific details are similar between the two. While not exhaustive, the following list is offered for illustration:

- a. Both are priests  
Jeremiah 1:1 † Ezekiel 1:3
- b. Both record the stories of their call by God  
Jeremiah 1 † Ezekiel 1-2
- c. They were not to be afraid of their fellow countrymen or to be dismayed  
Jeremiah 1:8 and :17 † Ezekiel 2:6 and 3:9
- d. Each make use of a caldron, boiling pot for analogy  
Jeremiah 1:13 † Ezekiel 11:3, 7; 24:3, 6  
And, the analogy of the "watchman"  
Jeremiah 6:17 † Ezekiel 3:17  
And, the analogy of the foundry  
Jeremiah 6:28-30 † Ezekiel 22:17-22  
And, the analogy of spreading a net to trap, trip up someone  
Lamentations 1:13 † Ezekiel 12:13; 17:20
- e. Both relate God remembering the love that He had once shared with His people and their subsequent Spiritual adultery  
Jeremiah 2:2 † Ezekiel 16:6-14  
And then  
Jeremiah 2:20; 3:1-3, 6, 20; 4:30; 5:7; 11:15; 13:25-27; Lamentations 1:8-9 † Ezekiel 16:15-38, 43; 23:3ff (graphic)
- f. Both give an indictment of their leaders – priests, prophets, kings, ancients, shepherds, etc. Numerous Passages, for example,  
Jeremiah 2:8; 23:1-8, 9ff † Ezekiel 8:11-12; 13:2ff; 34:1ff  
And, It is their own word, *of their own hearts*...  
Jeremiah 14:14; 23:16 † Ezekiel 13:2, 17
- g. They cite God pleading with the people as He did with their forefathers  
Jeremiah 2:4-5, 9, 35; 11:2-7; 44:9-10 † Ezekiel 20:33-36
- h. And, God saying they won't listen to you for they won't listen to Me  
Jeremiah 7:22-27 † Ezekiel 3:7; 2:4
- i. Both cite God comparing Judah to her treacherous and adulterous sister, Israel, but saying she is more justified than you  
Jeremiah 3:6-11 † Ezekiel 16:44-52; 23:2-11
- j. Both use the terminology *uncircumcised in heart*  
Jeremiah 4:4; 9:26 † Ezekiel 44:7, 9
- k. Both cite *deceit* by God  
1) In Jeremiah 4:10 Jeremiah tells God He has deceived the people and Jerusalem

- 2) In 15:18 asks, *Will You be altogether unto me as a liar (or deceitful) and as waters that fail me*
- 3) In 20:7 tells God, *You have deceived me, and I was deceived*
- 4) In Ezekiel 14:9 Gods says, *If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet*
- l. Both cite the use of an unfavorable wind as chastisement  
Jeremiah 4:11-12 † Ezekiel 17:10
- m. In each there is a vain search for a man to do right, to “stand in the gap,” to gain pardon from God  
Jeremiah 5:1 † Ezekiel 22:30
- n. Both indicate rampant adultery (immorality)  
Jeremiah 9:2; 5:8; 23:10, 14 † Ezekiel 22:9-11
- o. Both note The people have *eyes, and see not...ears, and hear not*  
Jeremiah 5:21, 23 † Ezekiel 12:2
- p. Both say the Prophets lie and the people love it, trust it  
Jeremiah 5:31; 13:25; 14:14; 27:10, 14-15; 28:15; 29:8-9, 31 † Ezekiel 13:6-7,10; 22:28  
And, they *Strengthen the hands of evildoers, wicked with their lies*  
Jeremiah 23:14 † Ezekiel 13:22  
And, they pacified (*healed, seduced*) the people saying, *Peace, peace when no peace*  
Jeremiah 6:13-14; 8:10-11; 23:17 † Ezekiel 13:9-10
- q. Both note the city of Jerusalem is full of violence  
Jeremiah 6:6-7 † Ezekiel 7:11, 23; 9:9
- r. Each one cites the desolation, extreme quiet, voice of activity taken away  
Jeremiah 7:34; 16:9; 25:10-11; 33:10-11 † cp. Ezekiel 26:13; 14:16
- s. Both use the idea of *gathering up your stuff*  
Jeremiah 10:17 † Ezekiel 12:3
- t. Both say God has charged them with a *conspiracy*  
Jeremiah 11:9 (men of Judah, Jerusalem) † Ezekiel 22:25 (prophets)
- u. Each quotes God to say, *They'll cry out, but I won't hear them*  
Jeremiah 11:11; 14:12 † Ezekiel 8:18
- v. They interestingly cite God saying He couldn't be moved to spare Israel even if “great men” stood before Him  
Jeremiah 15:1 (Moses and Samuel) † Ezekiel 14:13-14, 16-18, 20-21 (Noah, Daniel, and Job)
- w. Each are seen eating the Word of God  
Jeremiah 15:16 † Ezekiel 3:1-3
- x. Both say there was to be no mourning for the dead  
Jeremiah 16:5-7 † Ezekiel 24:16-23
- y. Both reiterate the Law of the Sabbath  
Jeremiah 17:21-27 † Ezekiel 20:12-16
- z. Each one notes hideous cannibalism  
Jeremiah 19:9; Lamentations 2:20; 4:10 † Ezekiel 5:10
- aa. Both quoted the Lord as saying, *I am against you*  
Jeremiah 21:13 † Ezekiel 5:8; 13:8
- bb. Both pronounce doom on the surrounding nations  
Numerous Passages
- cc. Both use the metaphorical saying (*proverb; mashal*), *The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge*

- Jeremiah 31:29-30 † Ezekiel 18:2-3
- dd. Each one notes there is to be destruction by *sword, famine and pestilence*  
 Jeremiah 24:10; 42:17, 22 † Ezekiel 6:11
- ee. They each point out the Law is taken from the priest; vision taken from the prophet  
 Lamentations 2:9 † Ezekiel 7:26
- ff. In each there is clapping of hands (in derision)  
 Lamentations 2:15 † Ezekiel 25:6
2. Additionally, note there are numerous parallels in which both Jeremiah and Ezekiel discuss the very pertinent topic of judgment on Judah, notably regarding:
    - <sup>a</sup>The condemnation of Judah and Jerusalem for their practices and their impending judgment; specifically, indicting them re the temple (defilement, misplaced trust, current practices), their idolatry, etc.;
    - <sup>b</sup>The captivity or exile in Babylon and their future return;
    - <sup>c</sup>The ultimate hope, deliverance, reunification of Israel and Judah, and redemption that would come through the future Messiah and His New Covenant (including new and specific terminology in some cases – e.g. “David”; “You shall be My people, and I will be your God”; “one heart,” “new heart”; “new spirit”; “shepherd”), etc.  
 (Topics to be covered by subsequent speakers; many references)
  3. Editorial Note: Though similar statements, analogies, relevant points made by both Jeremiah and Ezekiel might have different applications, this does not constitute a discrepancy. The similarity is simply noted, and it is not necessary to force a strict harmony between the two. It merely demonstrates the ultimate Author of both Books Who may have applied similar language to different subjects or points.

### ***Textual Criticism: Comparison of Manuscripts***

1. Until the discovery of the Qumran Caves Scrolls, a.k.a. Dead Sea Scrolls (DDS), between 1946 and 1956, the earliest manuscripts (mss) of the Old Testament (inc. Jeremiah) were basically those of the Masoretic Text (MT), commonly referred to as the *Hebrew Bible*, dating to about the 10<sup>th</sup> c. AD. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, commonly known as the Septuagint (LXX), dates to ca. 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC. The DDS date to between ca. 300 BC to AD 100.
2. A natural question arises from consideration of these manuscripts extant. Should one accept the long-standing tradition of the MT, from which modern English translations derive; or, should one reconsider and accept the Old Testament as found in the LXX (where notable differences are found)?
  - a. The Book of Jeremiah is at the center of that debate. The text of the LXX is approximately 7/8 the length (or about 2700 words shorter) than that of the MT. There are changes, substitutions, and obvious sections found in the MT that have been omitted from the LXX. Additionally, there is a transposition of what we know as Chapters 46-51, the *Address(es) Against the Nations*, to the middle of what we know as Chapter 25 (following Verse 13), and they do not follow the same order.
  - b. There are obvious resultant questions. *Was there ‘free translation’ in the LXX? Intentional abridging? Accidental omission? Paraphrasing? Was a completely different manuscript (or set of) used for Jeremiah in the LXX than in the MT? Conversely, is there embellishment in the MT? Are there additions by a second or later author? etc.*
3. The discovery of the DDS fueled the debate – on both sides!

- a. The DDS scroll of Jeremiah (4QJer<sup>b,d</sup>) is very similar to Jeremiah in the LXX, differing as dramatically from the MT. Those inclined toward the LXX tradition see the DDS mss of Jeremiah to corroborate their position.
- b. However, among the DDS is the *The Great Isaiah Scroll* (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) which contains virtually the entire Book of Isaiah (except for a few missing words where the edges had crumbled). While it does not match exactly, it is very similar to the text of Isaiah in the MT, differing dramatically from the LXX. (Actually, Isaiah differs relatively little in all three).
4. Re Textual Criticism
- a. Textual critics debating this question basically fall into 2 basic camps.
- 1) The *liberal critic* tends to favor the shorter versus the longer mss. He believes Biblical texts were generally “edited” (i.e. added to, embellished) over time, thus creating longer versions. Consider, e.g., the highly favored view that Mark is the earlier Gospel account to be written (and it probably from earlier sources still) because it is the shorter of the accounts. Matthew follows later, it is believed, having been edited with a number of additions over time. This liberal view neither accounts for the texts of the Bible being *God-breathed* nor *God-preserved* (both of which the Bible claims).
  - 2) The first consideration of the *conservative critic* is exactitude of transcription. He cares little about the length of the mss (at least he is not attracted to the shorter mss for the aforementioned reason). His view is founded on the precepts of the original Biblical texts being both *God-breathed* and *God-preserved*.
  - 3) It is not a question, then, of:
    - a) Which tradition has the *shorter text*? or,
    - b) Which mss are older? or,
    - c) Which tradition can be corroborated by the DDS?
- b. Studies in Textual Criticism must also consider:
- 1) Viable questions (as those presented above) surrounding the Greek translation (LXX), the manuscripts employed, any possible motives for variation, etc. Likewise, one must also question the actual import of the *use* of a translation and the inferred acceptance of its exact content.
  - 2) Exactly what the body of manuscripts found in the Qumran Caves (DDS) constitutes. Is it a highly scrutinized collection of Biblical texts in which the most accurate had been chosen? Or, is it a simple, even random, collection or library being preserved from discovery and destruction by the Romans without real consideration of content? Were they simply the chosen texts of some obscure cult? Such questions must be considered.
  - 3) The possible credence of the MT tradition of transcription. The word *Mesorah* refers to the transmission of a tradition (*something handed down*) and the *Masoretes* were groups of Jewish scribes, scholars, between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, devoted to preserving the Hebrew text of the Bible. They appear to be continuing the rabbinic tradition dating from antiquity of transcribing with extreme care exactly what was in earlier mss. This is exemplified in the 2 mss dated some 1000 years apart (the MT and the DDS) being virtually identical.
- c. To be sure, the deference of conservative scholars has been to the *Masoretic Text*. Neither the perceived widespread use of the *Septuagint Translation* nor the discovery of the *Dead Sea Scrolls* has given considerable reason to alter that.



## ***CONCLUSION***

Jeremiah is a wonderfully challenging Book of Scripture. It allows one to deeply explore the heart of a prophet who has been given the difficult task of delivering a heartfelt pronouncement from God. Many natural feelings and questions that grow from a prolonged service to God are explored through Inspiration. Thank God for this prophet and his work.

## ETDS 2015—JEREMIAH

### The Love of Lying Words

*Dale Smelser*

Intro: Background: the reigns of Hezekiah, Manasseh (Amon, 2 years), Josiah, (Jehoahaz, 3 months), Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah.

#### I. The Lying Words Addressed: Jeremiah 7:1-4

A. An Address during reign of Jehoikim in 608 B.C. (cf. Jer. 26:1ff)

B. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> parts of chapter: Forgiveness offered (v.5-7), then withdrawn (v.16)

C. The Furor in Between, response of religious establishment, Jer. 26:1-7,

1. priests and prophets rejected appeal, influencing people; Jer. 8:11; **5:30**

2. princes, certain elders side with Jeremiah, citing Micah: Jer. 3:16; 26:15-19

3. princes seem to cave at the preaching and execution of Uriah (Jer. 26:21ff)

4. as with Uriah, Jeremiah charged with disloyalty, against city, land, Jer. 38:4

D Beyond Redemption: Jer. 7:16-20; 11:14-17.

E Redolent ravaging anger of a good, merciful, loving, slow to anger God (Joel 2:13)

1. when blessed covenant is despised: Jer. 11:2, 3, 6, 8, 10

2. cannot read Jeremiah and take sin lightly.

#### II Address began at gates of Temple: “Hear all ye that enter at these gates to worship Yahweh”

A Standing in the breach, where the need is

1 but not avenging self-rejection, and thus anger not just personal

2. cared for people, glory of God: Jer. 14:7-9

B The personal cost: Jer.11:21; 20:14-17

C Passages describing sins of Judah in Jeremiah

1. Same spiritual whoredom as Israel, feigning return (3:10), made it worse. \*

2. I gave you ease, you turned your energies to fulfilling lust (Jer. 5:7-10)

3. unashamed, no ability to blush (Jer. 6:15. cf. Isa. 3:9)

4. ceremonies of covenant put ahead of ethical, moral (Jer. 7:21-23);

a. w/o “old paths,” sacrifices, extravagance vain (6:16-21; Amos 5:21-24)

5. See Temple as talisman, as fathers saw the ark at Shiloh (7:4, 12-15)

6. unmerciful, afflict the needy, shedding innocent blood (7:5-7; 22:3)

7. abominations even in God’s House (7:30; 32:34)

a. after Josiah reforms, II Kings 23:4, 6-7, return to sins of Manasseh,

Jer. 15:4, Amon, II Kings 21:20-21

8. children “passed through the fire.” Dedication or death? Clearly the latter  
Dt. 12:31; Psm. 106:37-38; II Ch. 28:3; Ezek. 16:21; Jer.7:31-32; 19:4-5

9. extent of idolatry: 11:13-15 (lewdness component literal, more than  
spiritual)

### III Judah’s Trust in Lying Words: Jer. 5:30

- A. Deceitful message of prophets kept priests popular, people compliant
- B. Seductive message made lie captivating. God pictured their sin: Jer. 13: 25-27
  - B. Words, “the temple” emphasized the lie in supposing distinctive ceremony efficacious while violating the ethical and moral demands of the covenant.
- C. What God’s House had been made:
  - 1. A den of robbers- Jer. 7:11
  - 2. Place for their idols. Jer. 7:30
  - 3. duplicitous paradox: Jer. 7:8-10
- D. God’s house: ceremonies there a charm, talisman, Keep God there
  - 1. proper emphasis when out of Egypt: 7:21 Ex. 20:1ff. - Honor, Obey, God

2. ceremonies, reminders and teachers. Without the first, second empty
3. extravagance not efficacious Jer. 6:20.

#### E. Applications

1. Use of God's house for own benefit; Jer. 7:21-22; Mk. 11:15-17
  - a. use what God's house (church) supplies, building, for own purpose unauthorized for congregation
  - b. baby showers, recreation, weddings, day care, etc.
2. contend for the "ceremonial," possess none of the ethical: Jer. 9:1-6
  - a. baptism, a capella, 1<sup>st</sup> Day contributions, etc., yet hateful, b. being covetous, Col. 3:5
  - c. James Cope's last FC lecture: "associated with folks liked less"
3. People whose faith is in Baptism, or "church membership." Neglect the ethical and spiritual components of gospel (Mt. 23:23-24)
4. Today, as Gnostics, some want to update the ethical and spiritual components of God's house *by their own light* (I Tim. 6:20-21), & deemphasize or alter "ceremonies." Little left of God's House. Judah at least had a temple left.
  - F. Lesson, lacking faith-obedience, false assurances of leaders "heal little," no shame, no peace (Jer. 8:10-12)

#### IV Remember Shiloh: Jer. 7:12 (between Shechem and Bethel in Ephraim, Judg. 21:19)

- A. House of God, Judges 18:31; Ark, I Sam. 4:4; God's name dwelled, Jer. 7:12
- B. This house in which ye trust, Jer. 7:14; 26:6
  1. Trust was in the house, not God
  2. Rather like members of digressing churches (like the furniture)
- C. After defeat by Philistines, Ark used as talisman to march before them.
- D. Battle lost, priests Hophni and Phineas killed, shocked Eli tumbles and dies
  1. Wife of Phineas gives birth, child named Ichabod: "The glory is departed."
- E. Summary and fulfillment: Psm. 78:60-61
  1. Without living covenant, a "tent" (house) and a box (ark), nothing.
  2. So Jerusalem, so temple, so their words. "the temple of God."

#### V. Surprising Sin Put with idolatry, adultery, burning children: Jer. 7:5.

- A. Not just neglect, but even oppressing the needy:
- B. Started at the top, Johoiakim: Jer. 22:13-19.
  1. judge the cause of poor and needy, essential to knowing God (22. 15)
- C. A prevalent sin: Jer. 5:26-29

1. Self-ishness: Amos 5:11-12
2. Self Indulgence: Isa. 3:15-24
- D. Contrast to earlier example: Boaz - Lev. 19:9-10; Ruth
  1. Note, person required to do what he could
  2. Contrast modern concepts: Newburgh, NY, Norfolk, VA.
- E. God's hierarchy of sin and man's often different, e.g., Rev. 21:8

## VI Topheth in Valley of the son of Hinnom (gai ben hinnom); Gehenna

A. Explanation of a place of constant refuse burning and criminal dump may be wrong.

1. That explanation in *Banes, Jamieson, Faucett & Brown, People's NT Comm.*
  - a. JFB: "If we may believe the Jewish writers..."
2. That concept first from Rabbi David Kimhi, ca. 1200 A.D.
3. Not mentioned in descriptions of city by Josephus

B. Location also makes that explanation improbable

1. Immediately below south side of Mt. Zion
2. Significance of Zion, Southwest of Temple Mount Moriah
  - a. First mentioned as City of David: II Sam. 5:7
  - b. Further Significance as City of God" Psm. 87:2-3
  - c. Seat and Source of God's Government, cf. Isa. 2:3

C. While the popular explanation possible, evidence for it appears weak.

D. Topheth Meaning: Some argue for Hebrew word, "toph," (drum, to drown out cries of children), others for "taph" (burning)

- a. JFB, John Wesley, "toph"
- b. ISBE, BDB, Pulpit: "taph" "place of burning"
- c. Examination of contexts indicates the latter, burning, or a place of, e.g.,

refer back to II, C, 8

E. Topheth A specific place in valley of son of Hinnom (II Kings 23:10; Jer. 19:14);

- a. other "topheths," for child sacrifice found in ancient near east.

F. Topheth Also a metaphor

- a. as in destruction of Syrian army (Isa. 30:33),
  - b. and the end of God's enemies (Isa. 66:24; cf. Mr 9:44,46,48);
  - c. Such "type" is a better and more supported type for NT Gehenna.

d. When Jesus spoke of Gehenna (valley of Hinnom), this place, the gross sin, the burning and punishment, were well remembered, meaningful.

H. What Judah did there: (Jer. 7:31-33)

I. In Judah's vile worship "Their sanctuary became their cemetery."

R. K. Harrison

**Conclusion:**

1. Physical expressions and implements of religion are worse than empty when the heart is not given to exclusive service, but to syncretic devotion (as Samaritans, II Kings 17:33), in vile, immoral and licentious self indulgence.
- 2, Concepts, messages, or philosophies separating the “ceremonial,” from worshiping God in truth, and abiding in his decreed morality, are lying words.
2. Such brings the actual wrath of God who is by nature Exclusive, Righteous, Holy.
3. Jeremiah teaches that God’s law and God’s nature are exclusive. Confirms and illustrates Ex. 20:5.

## ETDS 2015—JEREMIAH

### Jeremiah & Idolatry

*Scott Smelser*

#### Intro:

A. Exod. 20: 1-6 and the recurring problem

B. Jer. 16:10-11 And when you tell this people all these words, and they say to you, 'Why has the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? ... then you shall say to them: 'Because your fathers have forsaken me, declares the Lord, and have gone after other gods and have served and worshipped them, and have forsaken me and have not kept my law...'

C. Jer. 25:1-11 For 23 years Jeremiah called for repentance from wickedness and idolatry. Now judgment and captivity is coming.

#### I. Jeremiah texts on idolatry (not an exhaustive list)

- 2:7-8 defiled the land with abominations, and the prophets prophesied by Baal
- 2:23 Judah like a donkey in heat, those that seek her need not weary themselves
- 2:26-28 Where are your gods? Let them arise if they can save you
- 3:2-3 you have polluted the land with your whoredom, and without shame
- 3:6-9 comparison of Israel and Judah to 2 adultress sisters
- 3:22-23 delusions in the hills and orgies in the mountains
- 5:19 after serving foreign gods you will not serve in foreign lands
- 7:5-7 appeal for repentance from injustice and idolatry
- 7:9-10 vanity of coming before the Lord while continuing in abominations
- 7:16-18 family wide guilt in serving the "queen of heaven"
- 7:30-31 children burnt in the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom
- 8:19 carved images and foreign idols
- 9:13-15 to be scattered for stubbornly going after Baals
- 10:1ff learn not the vain ways of the nations; the emptiness of idols
- 11:10-12 you will call on the Lord, he will not answer, they will call on their idols, they cannot save
- 16:10-12 declarations are due to forsaking the Lord and serving other gods
- 16:16-18 the land polluted with the carcasses of detestable idols

17:2 idols and Asherim

19:1 proclamation to elders in the valley of the Sons of Hinnom

## II. Fallacies of Idolatry Jer. 10; Rom. 1:23,25

### III. Historical Information

- A. "Baal" & "Baalim" often in the OT; fertility god, storm god, king of the gods (Encl. Britannica); a sun god (jewishencyclopedia.com)
- B. "Asherim" goddess assoc. w/ Baal; statue near altar to altar of Baal (Ju. 6:25ff; 1K.16:32,33; 2Ki.23:4ff)
- C. "Queen of Heaven" Jer. 7:18; "as seems probable from the cakes which were offered, she is to be identified with the Assyrian Ishtar and the Canaanite Astarte" - T. Nicole; ISBE; Queen of Heaven; cf. also 2Ki.17:16 and Jer. 10
- D. sacrifice of children in the valley of Hinnom; Jer. 7:31; cf. 2Ki. 21:6; 2 Ki. 23:10 (Molech)
- E. rituals inclusive of fornication Jer. 3:23; cf. Hosea 4:13,14; 2 Ki. 23:7

### IV. Contrasting OT theology to the surrounding paganism

Surrounded by idolatry, polythiesm, and "big us" views of the gods, consider the starkly different message of Moses and the Prophets from an evidentiary point of view.

### V. Co-mingling of worship Jer. 7:9-10

- A. cf. 2 Kings 17:24-33
- B. cf. parallels seen in voodoo (voodoo altars mixed with Catholicism)
- C. cf. the parallel of the adulteress (cf. Pr.7), and her attempt to benefit from separate relationships
- D. warnings to the Corinthians ; 1 Cor. 10

### VI. Applications and warnings

- A. The fundamental error of idolatry: Rom. 1
- B. Broader senses, such as Col. 3:5
- C. materialism; celebrity & entertainment; humanism; wolves in sheeps' clothing; wolves in sheeps' book covers

CONCLUSION 2 Cor. 6:14-18, Josh. 24:15



## ETDS 2015—JEREMIAH

### Responses to Jeremiah

*Jon Focht*

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Some want to play along as if they really care what Jehovah says (to humor Jeremiah?)  
Some want to argue, some want to silence him (prison, banning him from temple, etc.),  
most want to kill him

A few respect him, and some try to encourage & help him... and some joined in the work with him

Those whose responses we're *not* going to be able to cover in this lecture...

-Zedekiah (Simon Harris) – Bi-polar or multiple personality disorder.

-God (14-16) – Very similar to book of Job; not a response to Jeremiah's preaching, but his prayers

-Josiah (have to go outside Jeremiah) – turned to God with all his heart, but people seem to have followed out of a sense of duty, or perhaps turned with a whimsical heart not fully devoted to Jehovah.

#### **Men of Anathoth (Jer. 11:18-23)**

-First people to respond to Jeremiah's preaching... and people from Jeremiah's hometown

(Mk. 6:4) People from Jesus' hometown were some of the first to respond negatively to Jesus' preaching

"Let us cut him off from the land of the living" – They didn't even want to remember his *name!* (:19)

-Some people have a habit of living in the past: "I remember when you were \_\_\_\_... how can you teach me?"

#### **Those in Judah & Jerusalem (18:11-12, 18)**

"There's no way we're going to repent! Our hearts are evil and we love it!" (Who would actually *say* this?)

-Their plan was to verbally abuse him, discredit him, perhaps scare and/or dishearten him...

-The people seem to be as fickle as Zedekiah at times. But their overall course is headed in wrong direction.

-Similar to a congregation whose faith is based solely on the preacher: Believe what they're told to believe.

**Passhur (19:14-20:6) ~ The "Patriarch" of a congregation**: "It's my way or the bye-way"  
 "Pashur" – "Liberation"... probably from root word (6582) which means "to tear in pieces"

(20:1-6) Priest & chief governor, and apparently a self-proclaimed prophet (:6)

-Jeremiah is prophesying in *his* "territory" (in the temple court) and he doesn't like Jeremiah's message

(:3) God renames him "Magor-Missabib" ~ "affright from around" (scared of what's around you)

-Both he *and* his friends would be terrified of him...

-His friends who were probably nearby, would have heard Jeremiah's prophecy about them all

-Imagine being him... or one of his friends... when Babylon comes to conquer!

**(38:1-6) [different Pashur] and other officials** (princes, NKJV)

"We don't like what he's saying... kill him!" (how to silence your opponents)

-They put him in the dungeon of Malchiah (seems they want him to suffer – not die a quick death)

**Priests, Prophets, People and Princes (26:1-19)**

(:1-3) God indicates that if the people would sincerely repent, He would forgive them.

(:4-6) If not... "I allowed Shiloh to be destroyed... same thing will happen to Jerusalem!"

(:7-8, 11) Priests, Prophets & People respond: "You will surely die!"

(:12-15) It's *not* just a message of doom – it's a message of opportunity! God's letting you repent!

(:16-19) The Princes [and the *people?*] respond: "Jeremiah speaks the truth. We need to repent!"

-Are these the *same* people? Perhaps "all the people" ~ general populace, not literally *everyone*.

(The people who shouted "Hosanna to the Son of David!" were the same who shouted "Crucify Him!")

-One group responds with *reason*. The other group responds with *anger*.

All of these responded with hate, indignation, anger & hostility.

-We may not *kill* someone who disagrees with us, but we'll may try to silence him or "kick him out!"

-The Priests & Prophets really represent the sectarian/denominational mindset: Agree w/ us or you're OUT!

-Reason controls anger; Anger thrusts reason aside: We will respond with one OR the other.

(Difference between addressing a disagreement [reason] and disobedience/sin [anger at sin])

**Jehoiakim (26:20-24, 36)** ~The teenage boy who has better things to do than listen to the voice of wisdom.

-25 years old when he begins to reign; selfish & refuses to pay people for their work (22:13-14)

-He wants *more* while his people are having to live on *less!* (Forces people to pay Pharaoh, 23:35-37)

-On two separate occasions, he is in the position to be like his father and lead the people away from evil.

#1 (26:1-19) Jeremiah speaks, defends himself... and the princes and people seem to realize need to repent.

(:20-24) Not told specifically how he responds, other than he kills a prophet who spoke the same things.

#2 (36:1-8) 4 years later, Neb has defeated Egypt and is knocking on Jehoiakim's door

(:9-10) The people are fasting before Jehovah [asking for help], Baruch reads God's message to them

-Perfect opportunity to preach!

(:11-19) The officials ("princes") ask Baruch to read it to them privately

(:16) God's word pricks their hearts – They're terrified! "We need to tell the king!"

(:19) They realize Jehoiakim will likely get angry & seek to harm Baruch & Jeremiah

(:20-26) Jehoiakim doesn't like what he hears so he burns the scroll, despite the leaders' protests

-It's easy for a leader to destroy/prevent growth. It's extremely difficult to initiate & stimulate it!

"I know what I'm doing!" (As he disrespects God's authority... later decides to rebel against Babylon too)

"No one can tell ME what to do!"

-It's easy to ignore commands/passages we don't like. But ignoring God doesn't make judgment go away!

(22:18-19) People won't even *care* that you're dead! You'll have a donkey's burial!

**Hananiah (28:1-17)**

-The "People's Preacher" – Rather than give the people what they need, he gives them what they want

-Jeremiah has just spoken about prophets like Hananiah (27:14-15)

(:2, 4, 11) "Thus says Jehovah" – Why would he or the people *care* what Jehovah says? Do they serve Him?

-How can he say this? Two possibilities, but same motivation (Greed, covetousness, selfishness, etc.)

1) His sin has allowed him to be deceived – He actually *thinks* God has spoken to him  
[Eze. 14:1-10] God shows how and why God’s people – and even *prophets* – can be deceived

(:4) “I... will be brought to give him an answer in the matter in view of the multitude of his idols,” (NAS)

-God seems to be saying, “I will answer the fool as his folly deserves, to put him to shame” ~ (Pr. 26:5)

(:5) I’ll do this to recapture the hearts of the people of Israel, who have all deserted me for their idols.’ (NIV)

(:7-8) I... will be brought to answer him in My own person. And I shall set My face against that man (NAS)

(2 Tim. 3:13) “Evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse, deceiving and *being deceived*”

-People love hope... and false hope is easier to sell!

2) He knows the word isn’t from God – He’s intentionally lying to the people

-Attitude of Impudence: He’s intentionally lying to God’s people before His prophet in His own house!

-He knows what God wants – but he gives the people what they want – in order to get what he wants!

(2 Tim. 4:3b-4) “According to their own desires... they will heap up for themselves teachers and they will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables”

(Hos. 4:5-9) “destroyed for a lack of knowledge... like people, like priest”

-The priests should have been the ones to *lead* the people in the way of God. Instead, they were allowing the will of the people to mold and shape the content of their teaching!

### **Johanah (40-43)**

“The Pretender” – When it comes to God’s will, he acts like he cares, but he doesn’t really care to act

(40:9-41:16) Johanah seems to want to protect his countrymen; rescues them from raiders (like Abraham)

-Who are the people looking to for leadership in a time like this? Someone to *protect them!*

-Pivotal moment in Johanah’s leadership: Do I direct the people to myself... or to God?

(:17-18) His idea: “Go to Egypt b/c Babylon might be angry with us for the attack on their people.”

(42:1-3) He seems wise enough to seek God’s counsel!

“A wise man will hear & increase in learning, & a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel” (Pr. 1:5)

(:4-6) Expresses a commitment to abide by God’s word: No matter what His will is!

-Being willing to accept correction from God & His word: Regardless what the sacrifice must be...!

(:7) Patience! He waits for 10 days before receiving a reply!

(Wonder how many of the people were nagging him saying things like, “Hey! What are we doing?”)

(:7-12) Good news! You can stay at home and God will have mercy on & protect you!

(:13-19) But there’s a warning: If you continue with your plan (Egypt) God will be angry & punish you!

But he’s actually dishonest and stubborn

(42:20-22) Johanan isn’t *sincere* in his request!

-Wonder how the people’s faces look as Jeremiah gives God’s word: Rolling eyes, shaking head, etc...?

(43:1-3) Johanan has already made up his mind what he’s going to do! So why even *ask* God?

-Why do people ask for advice when they’ve already made up their minds? Just hoping for reinforcement.

-Since when does God ever *reinforce* our will? We bend our will to meet God’s will (not vice versa)!

(:4-7) They continue on their own way... completely apathetic with respect to God’s commands.

**Nebuchadnezzar** [via Nebuzaradan] (39-40)

Around 589 BC (51:59) – The year before Neb comes to destroy Jerusalem – Baruch’s brother, Seraiah, is commanded to read aloud Jeremiah’s prophecy of Babylon’s destruction... concluding with, “*O Jehovah, You have spoken against this place to cut it off, so that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but it shall be desolate forever.*”

-Nebuchadnezzar: “Who told you to say this? What’s his name and address? I’m gonna pay him a visit!”

-Seraiah: “Jeremiah the prophet. He’s in Jerusalem. 028 Prison Ct.”

Jeremiah’s message of Babylon’s destruction isn’t that much different than his message to the Jews.

-What Jewish king has shown favor to Jeremiah? So how would you expect a foreign pagan king to react?

Nebuzaradan: The captain of the imperial bodyguard (Nebuchadnezzar's second in command, it would seem)

(52:12-14) He's left in charge of "Operation Jewish Captivity" as Neb goes back to Babylon (:11)

(39:9-10) He shows kindness to the poor people

(:11-12) Nebuchadnezzar's command: You obey Jeremiah's orders!

-Stands to reason he probably freed Baruch & EbedMelech too, perhaps at Jeremiah's request.

-So why does this foreign king come and treat Jeremiah with respect? Just because the Jews hate him?

-In all of Jeremiah, there's only one living individual whom God calls "My servant" – Jeremiah, right?

(25:9, 27:6, 43:10) "My servant... *Nebuchadnezzar*" (!)

-For about the past 5 years, Neb has been (slowly) influenced by Daniel

(40:1-4) Nebuzaradan says *Jehovah* has brought all this about – implying Babylon would not have conquered them if they'd obeyed Jehovah!

-But why tell Jeremiah this? He's been saying this for nearly 40 years!

-Imagine Jeremiah being freed from his chains... by Neb... in front of all the Jews... now bound in chains

"You should've listened to Jeremiah!"

## **Baruch**

(Jer. 36:1-7) God tells Jeremiah to write His words on a scroll... Jeremiah calls Baruch to write for him

-Jeremiah then tells Baruch to go *read* the scroll in the temple b/c he's not allowed in there. (:5-7)

How would *you* react if you were Baruch? Jeremiah's been ostracized for his message. Now it's *your* turn!

## Afraid & Depressed (Jer. 45)

(:1) indicates this was 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim's reign... which would be right before he begins preaching.

-Jeremiah was forbidden to enter temple (perhaps by Pashur, Jer. 20:1-6)

-He and at least one other prophet were an "enemy of the state" and hunted by King Jehoiakim (Jer. 26)

-It's easy to understand why Baruch might be reluctant & afraid to take on such a work

-It's possible that at the beginning of his story, he's a bit hopeful of becoming "great" (:5)

-Josephus records that Baruch was an aristocrat who managed Zedekiah's house at one point.

-Working with Jeremiah is one way to make sure you *don't* "move up the ladder"!

-God gives him encouragement of rebuilding what He's destroyed (:4) and promises to deliver him (:6)

### Courageous

-Courage isn't the absence of fear... it's the attitude that overcomes our fears.

-Jeremiah had commanded him to read the scroll on a fast day (i.e., impending doom – fasting/prayer)

(36:8-10) Baruch reads God's word to the people

(:11-13) Gemariah's son, Michaiah tells the officials (NKJV, "princes") what Jeremiah wrote

-They summon Baruch, who reads it to them – then he explains how he wrote the scroll

-He's not directing them to himself, but to the prophet of Jehovah (so they know it's God's word)

-They show concern for Baruch & Jeremiah's safety (:19) because they know his life will be in danger.

-Baruch is willing to put himself in harm's way to get God's message to His people.

### Patient

-Not just "OK, I'll wait" but continuing to labor until the task is done... even if you can't see "results"

(43:1-3) Baruch has become so influential that the captains & leaders of the people accuse Jeremiah of being under his influence!

-He's been the one constantly "in the public eye"... "But it hasn't done any good!"

-If he's taught enough to make these kinds of enemies, he has encouraged "the remnant" (Rom. 9:27)

(43:6-7) Baruch ends up going to Egypt with Jeremiah [probably forced by Johanan (:5)]

"That's it? All that work, all that teaching and *nobody listens to us?* What's the point?"

-Some people *did* listen... and some people are *still* listening to the words spoken by Baruch today!

(31:31-34) "The covenant of the last days"

In 1975 the first few pieces of 200 clay bullae were discovered in the shop of an antiquities dealer in East Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> Bullae are lumps of clay which were attached to documents and impressed with a seal. From the shape of its Hebrew characters (which vary throughout history) scholars date the collection to the 6th century BC, the time of Jeremiah.

lbrkyhw – [belonging] to Berachyahu

bn nryhw – son of Neriyahu

hspr – the scribe

Baruch – “the blessed” / Berachyahu – “the blessed of Jehovah”



## ETDS 2015—JEREMIAH

### Zedekiah: A King Fit for the People

*Simon Harris*

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#### Introduction

1. Imagine having your entire existence summed up with these words:  
*“Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of the LORD. And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear an oath by God; but he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD God of Israel.” 2 Chronicles 36:11-13, NKJV.*
2. More is recorded about King Zedekiah, the last man to wear that title in Judah. However, it only serves to demonstrate the truth of the chronicler’s summary.
3. In many ways, Zedekiah is the embodiment of all that was wrong in Judah. His character validates God’s decision to destroy Jerusalem and punish His children.
4. While it might be easy to cast reproach, taunt, and curse the wicked King, it is far more profitable to look at his life with the humble attitude that asks, “Is it I?”

#### Discussion

##### I. The History of Zedekiah

- A. Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah king over Judah after he besieged Jerusalem and carried King Jehoiachin away captive to Babylon. (2 Kings 24)
  1. He was the third son of Josiah (1 Chr. 3:15) and the uncle of Jehoiachin.
  2. He was twenty-one years old and he reigned for eleven years.

- B. Jeremiah had been preaching for thirty years by the time Zedekiah was placed on the throne. (Jeremiah 1:2; 25:1-3)
1. Jeremiah had already correctly predicted the coming invasion of Nebuchadnezzar and the people being taken captive.
  2. He had even accurately foretold of Jehoiachin's surrender. (Jeremiah 22:24-27)

- C. Shortly after Zedekiah became king, Jeremiah was given a vision from God announcing the fate of the new king and his realm. (Jeremiah 24)
1. He saw a vision of two baskets of figs. One had very good figs and the other had very bad figs.
  2. God said the good figs represented those who had been carried away captive and the bad figs were the people who had been left in the land.
  3. God also said He would give up Zedekiah and those who remained in the land to “sword, famine, and pestilence” until they were consumed.
- D. It seems likely that around this same time Jeremiah sent a letter to the captives in Babylon telling them to settle in for a long captivity. (Jeremiah 29)
1. He said they should build houses, plant gardens, have families, and even pray for peace in Babylon.
  2. He announced that the captivity would last seventy years. (Vs. 10)
  3. Jeremiah called those who had not been taken captive, “rotten figs.” (Vs. 17)
  4. He warned them not listen to the false prophets who were saying that the captivity would be over shortly.
- E. In the fourth year of Zedekiah’s reign, Jeremiah warned Zedekiah and the kings of the surrounding nations not to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, but to “put their necks under his yoke. (Jeremiah 27)
1. There is a textual question concerning the name of the king in verse 1.
    - a) The context favors Zedekiah (27:3; 12; 28:1), leading many expositors to suggest “Jehoiakim” is a copyist error and is so translated by the ESV, NASB, and others. (Humphries, p. 293-294)
    - b) Others accept the text as is (ASV, KJV, NKJV, RSV) and offer various explanations, among them being that God had Jeremiah make the yokes during Jehoiakim’s reign to be used in the time of Zedekiah.
  2. Jeremiah made bonds and yokes for himself and sent them to the kings of the surrounding nations via messengers who had come to visit Zedekiah.
    - a) It is likely that these were ambassadors who had come to discuss a rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar.

- b) We know for certain that Zedekiah had reached out to Egypt seeking an alliance against Nebuchadnezzar. (Ezekiel 17:11-21)
- 3. God through Jeremiah assured these kings that He is the true power behind Nebuchadnezzar's conquest. Therefore, it was senseless to rebel.

4. Jeremiah encouraged the neighboring kings to submit to Nebuchadnezzar.
    - a) If they would do so, they could continue living in their lands.
    - b) If they rebelled, God would punish them with sword, famine, and pestilence until they were consumed from the land. (Jeremiah 27:8)
    - c) He even told them not to listen to their advisors who would contradict the message from God.
  5. Jeremiah told Zedekiah to listen to the same message he'd delivered to the surrounding nations.
    - a) He, too, must serve Nebuchadnezzar or die.
    - b) Jeremiah told Zedekiah not to listen to prophets who lie and say that he should rebel against Nebuchadnezzar.
  6. Jeremiah even spoke to the priests of Judah.
    - a) They must not to listen to the prophets who lie saying that the articles of the temple taken by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:13) would be returned.
    - b) Instead, they ought to pray that he won't come back and take the rest.
- F. Jeremiah's prophecy led to open conflict with a false prophet. (Jeremiah 28)
1. Hananiah, claiming to speak for God, confronted Jeremiah in the temple.
  2. He said that within two years Judah would no longer serve Nebuchadnezzar and that the vessels of the temple would be returned.
  3. Jeremiah said he wished it were true, but Hananiah's message wasn't from God. He said the true message from God would be the one that came to pass.
  4. Hananiah attacked Jeremiah and broke the yoke he was wearing, and Jeremiah left.
  5. Later, at God's direction, Jeremiah returned saying that even though Hananiah had broken the wooden yoke it would be replaced with one made of iron, and that Hananiah would be dead within a year.
  6. Two months later, Hananiah was dead.

G. Also in the fourth year of Zedekiah, Jeremiah sent a prophecy to the city of Babylon announcing that it would be destroyed forever. (Jeremiah 51:59-64)

- H. In spite of all this, Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar quickly answered the rebellion by launching a massive campaign against the tiny kingdom of Judah. (2 Kings 24:20-25:11)
1. "Zedekiah rebelled in spite of all that had befallen Jerusalem: he had learned nothing from recent events." (Bimson, p. 385)
  2. This time Nebuchadnezzar brought the full force of his army down upon the rebellious nation. (Jeremiah 34:1)
  3. Nebuchadnezzar surrounded Jerusalem and began to systematically conquer the fortified cities of Judah. (Jeremiah 34:7)
- I. Zedekiah sent messengers to Jeremiah hoping for a miracle. (Jeremiah 21)
1. There would be no divine reprieve for Jerusalem as there had been in the days of Hezekiah. (2 Kings 19:35-36)
  2. Instead God announced that any defense of the city would be useless, because He is the one who fights against Jerusalem. (Vss. 4-5)
  3. Zedekiah would be delivered into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and the city would be burned.
  4. The only hope offered is to individuals who were willing to surrender. (Vs. 9)
  5. Zedekiah was seeking divine intervention while actively rebelling against God and foolishly relying on help from Egypt.
- J. Later during the siege, God sent Jeremiah to Zedekiah warning him that there would be no escape. (Jeremiah 34:1-7)
1. The city would be burned with fire.
  2. Instead of escaping, Zedekiah would have a face-to-face meeting with Nebuchadnezzar.
  3. Jeremiah also told Zedekiah he would not die in battle, but in peace. (Vss. 4-5)
  4. He concluded with an assurance that this was the word of the Lord.
- K. It seems that during the early days of the siege Zedekiah issued a decree to free all the Hebrew slaves. All the people initially obeyed the decree and then something happened to make them change their minds. (Jeremiah 34:8-22)

1. *Maybe* this was done in an effort to entreat God's favor. God did say it was the right thing to do. (Vs. 15)
  2. What *may* have happened to change everyone's mind was a sudden withdrawal of Nebuchadnezzar's army.
    - a) The Babylonian army left the siege to fight an Egyptian invasion. (Jeremiah 37:5, 11)
    - b) This was probably the result of an alliance forged by Zedekiah with the Egyptian Pharaoh Hophra. (Ezekiel 17:11-21) (Humphries, p. 394)
  3. Jeremiah rebuked the people for breaking their covenant with the freed slaves.
  4. God sarcastically proclaimed "liberty" for the people of Judah to be troubled by sword, pestilence, and famine.
  5. He also told them that Nebuchadnezzar would be returning soon to burn the city with fire and remove its inhabitants.
- L. During this same time, Zedekiah sent messengers to Jeremiah asking the prophet to pray for Judah. (Jeremiah 37:1-10)
1. God had actually forbidden Jeremiah from doing so. (Jeremiah 7:16)
  2. Instead, he sent Zedekiah a message of doom.
    - a) Nebuchadnezzar was going to return.
    - b) There was no saving the city. Even if only the wounded were left among the Babylonians, they would rise up and take the city.
- M. While Nebuchadnezzar's forces were withdrawn, Jeremiah tried to go claim some property in the land of Benjamin, but was arrested and imprisoned for attempting to defect. (Jeremiah 37:11-15)
1. At some time while in prison, Jeremiah actually bought a piece of land in his hometown of Anathoth from his uncle Hanamel. (Jeremiah 32:1-15)
  2. It's difficult to know the chronology of these two events.
    - a) Did Jeremiah buy the land, and then try to go see it?
    - b) Did Jeremiah try to go see the land first, and later decide to buy it unseen?
    - c) Are the two events even related?
  3. The point of the land purchase was to show that the remnant will return. (Jeremiah 32:15, 36-44)



N. While Jeremiah was in prison, Zedekiah arranged a secret meeting with him to ask if there was any word from God. (Jeremiah 37:16-21)

1. Jeremiah assured him that there was a word from God.
2. It was the same one Zedekiah had been hearing since the beginning.
3. The indecisive king seemed to expect God to be just as fickle as he was.

O. A short time after this, Jeremiah's enemies made a move to silence his preaching for good. (Jeremiah 38:1-13)

1. Jeremiah was preaching the same message to the people that he had proclaimed before Zedekiah.
  - a) The city was doomed.
  - b) The only hope was to defect to the Babylonians.
2. His enemies accused him of treason and petitioned the king to execute him.
3. Zedekiah claimed that he could not stand against the princes and that they should do with him as they pleased. (Vs. 5)
4. They put Jeremiah in a cistern/dungeon and left him to die.
5. Ebed-Melech, a eunuch in the king's service, then petitioned the king to let Jeremiah out of the dungeon, and the king acquiesced.
6. Even when he did what was right, Zedekiah appears weak and uncertain.

P. Zedekiah arranged yet another secret meeting with Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 38:14-28)

1. He told Jeremiah to just give him the truth and not to hold anything back.
2. Jeremiah said it was likely to get him killed and that Zedekiah wouldn't listen to his advice.
3. Zedekiah promised not to kill him, but he didn't promise to listen.
4. Jeremiah told the king that even at this last hour if he would surrender, God would spare the city and he and his family would live. However, if he refused, the city would be burned and he would lose his family.
5. Zedekiah said he was afraid of the Jews who had defected to the Babylonians, that they would torture him.
6. Jeremiah assured him that would not be the case if he would obey God.

7. Jeremiah further told Zedekiah that if the king did not surrender he would be to blame for Jerusalem's destruction. (Vs. 23)

Q. "In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth *day* of the month, the city was penetrated." (Jeremiah 39:2)

1. So important is the fall of Jerusalem in the history of God's people that it is recorded at least four times in the Scriptures. (2 Kgs. 25; 2 Chr. 36; Jer. 39; 52)
2. Zedekiah, acting against the advice of Jeremiah, tried to escape from Nebuchadnezzar's forces and was captured before reaching the Jordan River. (Jeremiah 39:5)
3. Zedekiah was taken to Riblah for his face-to-face meeting with Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah's punishment was severe.
  - a) His sons were killed before his eyes.
  - b) His eyes were then put out.
  - c) He was bound and carried to Babylon where he was put in prison until the day of his death.
4. Everything Jeremiah said would happen came to pass simply because Zedekiah refused to humble himself.

## II. The Lessons From Zedekiah

- A. As was stated in the introduction, Zedekiah in many ways symbolizes the sins of the people over whom he reigned reminding us that nations often get the leaders they deserve.

### Sins of Zedekiah

- *Did evil in the sight of the Lord  
altars  
like Jehoiakim (52:2)*

### Sins of Judah

- *More gods than cities; more  
than streets (11:13)*
- *Did not humble himself before Jeremiah (37:2)*
- *Did not listen to prophets (25:4)*
- *Stiffened his neck against God (2 Chr. 36:14)*
- *Did not listen to God (25:8)*

- B. These sins were the result of some bad attitudes and were fostered by mistakes that are all too common among men.
- C. Zedekiah's failures seem to be centered on some misplaced opinions and faulty viewpoints.
1. He trusted the wrong people.
    - a) False prophets saying what he wanted to hear. (Jeremiah 27:14-15; 37:19)
    - b) Men who were more concerned about themselves. (Jeremiah 38:4)
    - c) People who God specifically forbade him to trust - Egypt. (Jeremiah 37:5-10)
    - d) We can be guilty of the same thing when we:
      - (i) only listen to those who speak smooth things to us.
      - (ii) reject those who correct and rebuke us.
      - (iii) show favor only to those who agree with us.
  2. He feared the wrong things.
    - a) He struggled to hold onto his position in a conquered kingdom, serving at the whim of a foreign oppressor.
      - (i) He would have been successful in his position had he simply followed God and done his job in serving the people. (Jeremiah 21:11-12)
      - (ii) We should strive to simply be servants and forget about any imagined "position" we might think we have attained.

- b) In his lust for affirmation, he strove to gratify people as fickle as himself instead of pleasing an unchanging God.
  - c) He let the unfounded fears of his imagination stifle him from doing what he knew was right. (Jeremiah 34:4; 38:19-20)
    - (i) He should have been more afraid of God, and even Nebuchadnezzar.
    - (ii) We often let the same kind of unfounded fears stop us from being the preachers, husbands, fathers, and brothers we ought to be.
3. He wanted what he wanted, not what God wanted. He was too concerned about the here and now.
- a) At least four times, Zedekiah sought a word from Jeremiah (21:1-2; 37:3; 37:17-16; 38:14), each time expecting to hear something different than what God had already revealed to him.
  - b) All the while he was trying to forge an alliance with surrounding nations to thwart God's plan.
  - c) It's interesting that Zedekiah knew what Jeremiah was saying about him and the city, but he ignored what God had revealed about the future of the remnant.
  - d) Too often, we are just the same in our rejection of God's plans as they relate to evangelism, spiritual growth, and church discipline.
- D. Zedekiah's skewed worldview led to his downfall as a leader of God's people.
1. He failed to execute justice. (Jeremiah 32:1-5; 38:1-6)
    - a) *Many seek the ruler's favor, but justice for man comes from the LORD.* (Proverbs 29:26)
    - b) His job as king was to execute God's justice. By rejecting God's counsel, he assured his own failure.
    - c) May we first fear God and seek His wisdom as we lead others.
  2. He gave the people no reason to trust him.
    - a) After reigning for four years, the false prophets were predicting the return of an evil king who had only reigned for three months before being deposed and deported. (Jeremiah 28:4)
    - b) The key to inspiring confidence in others is to fear God and keep His commandments. (Joshua 1:6-7)

3. He inspired no loyalty among the people.
    - a) In the time of his greatest crisis, his army scattered. (Jeremiah 52:8)
    - b) Compare this to the actions of David's men. (2 Samuel 23:13-17)
    - c) Leaders who only look out for themselves will soon be chief among men of the same spirit.
  4. He wielded no real power.
    - a) He admitted as much. (Jeremiah 38:5)
    - b) He didn't even have the gumption to stand up to a servant in his house. (Jeremiah 38:7-10)
      - (i) Zedekiah certainly did the right thing by allowing Ebed-Melech to rescue Jeremiah, but it made him look weak and indecisive.
      - (ii) A man of strength and character must make the right decision at the proper time.
- E. While Zedekiah's life is summed up by the inspired writers as an utter failure, God's dealings with the evil king shine as a beacon from the midst of a tragedy.
1. God was patient with Zedekiah and Judah.
    - a) Jeremiah spoke directly to Zedekiah at least six times, and the message never changed.
    - b) God tried everything, *until there was no remedy*. (2 Chronicles 36:16)
    - c) Speaking of the end of God's patience with Jerusalem, Jeremiah said, "...till He *finally* cast them out from His presence" (Jeremiah 52:3) (Emphasis mine)
    - d) *...and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation...* (2 Peter 3:15)
  2. God is willing to forgive.
    - a) In spite of all their rebellion, God promised to forgive them, bring them back, and give them the Messiah. (Jeremiah 33:4-9, 14-18)
    - b) *For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.* (Psalms 86:5)
  3. God is faithful.
    - a) God kept every promise He uttered by the mouth of Jeremiah.
    - b) *If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.* (2 Tim. 2:13)
  4. God is just.

- a) Judah received the punishment she deserved. Zedekiah received the just reward of his disobedience.
- b) *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.* (Galatians 6:7)

## Conclusion

1. The name Zedekiah will forever be linked to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the epitaph of “evil king” will always be his.
2. His story has not been left for us to smugly scorn his stupidity, or self-righteously ridicule his rejection of revelation. Instead, God has seen fit to preserve this tragic portrait of self-reliance and stubbornness that we might see ourselves and repent before something far worse comes upon us.

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## ETDS 2015—JEREMIAH

### The 70 Year Captivity

*Tim Reeves*

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- I. Threatened as Penalty of Breaking the Covenant
- A. Lev. 26:25, "I will also bring upon you a sword...so that you will be delivered into enemy hands." V.33, "You, however, I will scatter among the nations and will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste."
  - B. Deut. 4:26-31, Moses preached this threat in his farewell address: "you will surely perish quickly from the land...The Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the Lord drives you."
  - C. Deut. 28:32-37, One of the "curses" as consequence of disobedience to Jehovah: "The Lord will bring you...to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known...You shall become a horror...among all the people where the Lord your God drives you." See also vv. 63-65.
  - D. Jer. 11:6-8, "For I solemnly warned your fathers in the day I brought them up from the land of Egypt...therefore I brought on them all the words of this covenant."
- II. Jeremiah's References to Captivity
- A. The destruction of Jerusalem and Judah, and the captivity of survivors comprises a *large element* of his prophecy, along with the *causes* of this.
  - B. In the vision of the Boiling Pot from the North, 1:13-16, it is *implied* among "My judgments on them" which God would bring by means of Babylon and company.
  - C. The first explicit reference to it is in 5:19, "As you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you shall serve strangers in a land that is not yours."
  - D. Next, 9:16 uses the expression "I will *scatter* them among the nations"; 10:18, "I am *slinging out* the inhabitants of the land"; and 16:13, "I will *hurl* you out of this land", each denoting violent disruption.



- E. In 13:17, 19, 24, it is the penalty for Judah being a once beautiful, now ruined ornamental “waistband.”
- F. Not even the intercession of Moses and Samuel (!) could avoid Judah’s destiny to death, sword, famine, and captivity, 15:1-2.
- G. 17:1-4, Judah’s sin of idolatry was so brazen and blatant it was “written down with an iron stylus; with a diamond point it is engraved upon the tablet of their heart.” Their *idolatry* was a *chief cause* of the captivity, v.4.
- H. Other causes were: violating statutes of the Law, thereby dishonoring God, like Sabbath-breaking (17:19-27); injustice toward fellowman (7:5-7); greed; pride; and immoral daily living, like lying (9:3) theft, murder, and adultery (7:9; 29:23), even among the prophets (23:14)!
- I. Later, his prediction of captivity was the direct denouncing of the false prophets who declared that Nebuchadnezzar, who had come against them and besieged them, would withdraw and go home (ch. 37-38).
- J. He counseled voluntary surrender to captivity by the Babylonians. Then it would be a good thing: they would “keep their life as booty” (21:9), and would be regarded as “good figs” (ch. 24) to whom God would eventually do good and replant them in the land.

### III. Significance of Captivity; Deportation from the Land

- A. Just as keeping covenant brought the blessing of enjoying prosperity in the land (Deut. 28:11), so perishing from off the land only emphasized to them their breaking of covenant.
- B. It was the particular land where Jehovah had “chosen to cause My name to dwell.” Since they had profaned His name they should not be allowed to continue dwelling there. Likewise, upon “returning to God,” God would return them to the place of His name. See Neh. 1:8-9. See also Jer. 15:1, “send them away from My presence and let them go!”
- C. Whereas God had redeemed them from bondage in Egypt, for their disobedience “the Lord will bring you back to Egypt in ships, by the way about which I spoke to you, ‘You will never see it again!’” (Deut.28:68). Hosea prophesied their return to Egypt, both literally for some “in the land of Egypt”(7:16), and figuratively, explaining, “They will not return to the land of Egypt; But Assyria – he will be their king, because they refused to return to Me” (11:5).
- D. Since they wanted to, and did, serve other gods, Jehovah would remove them from the vicinity of Jerusalem and the temple and send them to nations where they would be “forced” to serve other gods, even if indirectly, by serving those kings and people. See Jer. 16:11-13; then 5:19.

#### IV. Significance of the "70 Years"

- A. It was Jeremiah who *uniquely* prophesied that the captivity would last 70 years. The three references to "70" are: 25:11, and 12; and 29:10. The references back to this prophecy of Jeremiah are: 2 Chron. 36:21; Ezra 1:1; Dan. 9:2; and Zech. 7:5.
- B. The most basic point about the mention of "70 years" in 29:10 is that "the exile will be *long*" (v. 28), not brief as was popularly held. So, he counseled them to settle in for a long stay: "Build houses and live in them; and plant gardens...take wives and become fathers...and multiply there and do not decrease...And seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare" (v. 4-7).
- C. 2 Chron. 36:21. The chronicler declared, "in order to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah...until seventy years were complete." He also revealed the significance that during the 70 years the land "enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept Sabbath until seventy years were complete." This implies that previously Judah had disregarded the keeping of every sabbath (7<sup>th</sup>) year, when the land should be allowed to "rest" and lie fallow, unworked. 70 sabbath years would make up for 490 years of previous neglect. That would basically cover the period of the kings (the monarchy). God's will in this matter was *forcibly "honored"* during the captivity.
- D. Definitely, there is *symbolism* in the number "70". It itself is comprised of two symbolic numbers: "7", denoting perfection or completeness; and "10", denoting fullness or greatness.
  - 1) Similarly, Isaiah prophesied that for her punishment "Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years" (Isa. 23:15-17).
  - 2) Note requirement for full, complete forgiveness in "seventy times seven", Mt. 18:22.
  - 3) Note the Seventy elders who served under Moses, Num. 11:16-17.
  - 4) Note the Sending of the Seventy, Lk. 10:1.
  - 5) Both the Dragon and the Beast he empowered had "seven heads and ten horns", Rev. 13:1; 17:3.
  - 6) When Daniel recognized the 70 year captivity was at its close, there was revealed to him *another period* of "70", namely, "70 Weeks" (Dan. 9:24ff).
- E. All this would signify that the period of captivity would be a great and full punishment; a severe and fitting recompense for their crimes against

God. Compare God's threat of punishing them "seven times for your sins" (Lev. 26:18, 21, 24, 28).

- F. It also appears to hold significance in respect to God's dealing with Babylon. "When seventy years are completed *for* Babylon...", 29:10, and "Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation", 25:12. God would demonstrate *great and full toleration* for the accumulation of Babylon's wickedness.
- G. Now, is the number "70" also meant to be understood *literally* and *exactly*?
- 1) Jameson, Fausset, Brown (Vol. I, part 2, p. 581) cite Josephus ('Antiquities', book XI, ch. I, secs. 1 and 2), in commenting on Cyrus' Decree in Ezra 1:1, as saying, "In the first year of the reign of Cyrus, *which was the seventieth* from the day that our people were removed out of their own land into Babylon...according as He (God) foretold to them by Jeremiah the prophet...that after they had served Nebuchadnezzar ... seventy years He would restore them again to the land of their fathers." Josephus took the "70" as literal and exact. But there are problems with such a chronology.
  - 2) Consider the following. There were three deportations, each increasing in significance, that should be considered comprising the entire captivity:
    - a. "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim" (605 B.C.), noted by Daniel as the year of his own deportation, along with others. Dan. 1:1-7. (Note, this was considered the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoiakim by Jeremiah, 25:1)
    - b. In the first, and only, year (in fact, 3<sup>rd</sup> mo.) of Jehoiachin (597 B.C.), Nebuchadnezzar took him and the royal family as well as 10,000 of the higher classes into exile. 2 Kgs. 24:10-17. Ezekiel was included in this deportation, Ezek. 1:1-3.
    - c. In the eleventh year of Zedekiah (586 B.C.), culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, as witnessed directly and recorded by Jeremiah, Jer. 39:1-10.
  - 3) Although several of Jeremiah's prophecies reference the exile from the time of Jehoiachin's (597 B.C., 2<sup>nd</sup> deportation, above), as in 52:31 (see also 2 Kgs.25:27), yet it is significant to note that it was Daniel who discerned the 70 years was at a close and he would be personally aware that the captivity began with his own in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Jehoiakim (605 B.C.) This date should be given the most weight in understanding when they would have considered the captivity as beginning.

- 4) As an end date for the captivity, Cyrus' Decree, in his 1<sup>st</sup> year, was seen by the Bible's writers as signaling the official end of the captivity, 2 Chron. 36:22; Ezra 1:1. Scholars, today, universally recognize the year 538 B.C. as Cyrus' 1<sup>st</sup> year. William Albright affirms "The historicity of Cyrus' Edict in 538 has been confirmed by archaeological discoveries" (Zondervan Pict. Ency, vol. 2, p. 460).
- 5) In actual amount of time, from 605 B.C. to 538 B.C., inclusive, is 68 years.
- 6) Hence, most would agree that the "70 Years" was *a meaningfully symbolic number which, as a round number, also approximated the actual time of the duration of the captivity.* (How's that for an answer!) Evidently, Daniel so regarded the number as to look for the end of the captivity when he did.

#### V. Living Conditions of the Exiles in Babylon

- A. As noted above, from Jer. ch. 29, the exiles would be able to lead quite normal day to day lives, although they were restricted and taxed. They built and owned houses, and farmed the land. They borrowed and lent. Ezekiel lived in a house (Ezek. 3:24) and was free to move about and address the exiles.
- B. This is not to be construed as no punishment. They were moved to grief and sadness as witnessed by the "captivity Psalms" they wrote (Ps. 137, 126, and cf. 80)
- C. Recent archaeological discoveries of official documents of business transactions among the Jewish exiles have shed light on their relatively normal lifestyle. See book, "Documents of Judean Exiles and West Semites in Babylonia in the Collection of David Sofer", by Laurie E. Pierce and Cornelia Wunsch.

## ETDS 2015—JEREMIAH

### A Messiah in Jeremiah: The Restoration of All Things

*Nathan Combs*

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#### I. Introduction

- A. Both Jeremiah's personal life and the nation in which he prophesied were tumultuous and desolate - if anyone had reason to look forward to the Messianic time, it was Jeremiah!
- B. Despite extensive promises of destruction, God promised that He would "not make a full end" of the Jewish nation - 4.27; 5.10, 18; 30.11; 48.26
- C. Jeremiah is the only OT prophet to explicitly foretell a "new covenant" - Jer. 31.31
- D. It seems appropriate that God would choose one of the darkest times in Jewish history to reveal his future plans for restoring the world back to Himself

#### II. Body

##### A. Messianic Metaphor: The Righteous Branch

###### 1. In Jeremiah

- a) Evil shepherds of Jeremiah's day contrasted with David's righteous son (23.5-6)
- b) God will be faithful to keep his promises to David and Israel (33.14-16)

###### 2. In other prophets

- a) Branch will be glorious, Spirit-filled, a suffering servant (Isaiah 4.2, 11.1, 53.2)
- b) Branch will be builder of the temple (Zechariah 6.12)

##### B. Messianic Passages in the Gospels

- 1. Jesus drives out money-changers and temple desecrators (7.11)

2. Judas returns his blood money and kills himself (19.1-13)
3. Herod slaughters the children of Bethlehem (31.15)

#### C. The Restoration of Israel

1. "I know the plans I have for you..." to complete the exile after 70 years (29.10-14)
2. Jacob shall be saved, enemies destroyed (46.27-28)
3. The devoured, gnawed, hunted sheep will return to his pastures (50.19-20)
4. The strong Redeemer will rescue the oppressed Israelites (50.33-34)

#### D. The Restoration of the World

1. The nations will come to the Lord
  - a) All shall gather to God's throne in Jerusalem (3.15-18)
  - b) Evil nations plucked up and then restored (12.14-17)
2. Specific nations besides Judah promised restoration after judgment
  - a) Egypt - 46.26
  - b) Moab - 48.47
  - c) Ammon - 49.6
  - d) Elam - 49.39

#### E. The Book of Consolation (30.1-33.26)

1. Repeated phrases
  - a) "I will restore" - 30.3, 17, 18; 31.18, 23; 32.44; 33.7, 11; 33.26
  - b) "Behold, the days are coming" - 30.3; 31.27, 31, 38; 33.14
  - c) "I will be their God and they shall be my people" - 30.22; 31.1, 33; 32.38
2. The coming covenant (31.27-40)
  - a) Building, planting, growing (27-30)
  - b) Knowledge, forgiveness, relationship (31-37)

c) City of God, fortified, holy, invincible (38-40)

### III. Conclusion: The Unexpectedly Unshackled Prisoner (52.31-34)

1. Jehoiachin is released from his Babylonian prison, given a change of clothing, and provided with a place of honor at the king's table (also recorded in 2 Kings 25.27-30)
2. These events are deeply symbolic of much greater redemptions
  - a) For the original readers: this story looks forward to release of Jews from captivity
  - b) For Christians: this story foreshadows the ultimate restoration God is bringing