

The Book of Jeremiah

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Introduction to Jeremiah

Few biblical books are as challenging to readers as Jeremiah. It does not unfold in chronological order, nor does it typically present an upbeat message. Set in the most turbulent era in Israelite history, it focuses upon the consequences of the chosen people's chronic rebellion against God. Without question, Jeremiah is a sad book that forces its readers to think.

At the same time, Jeremiah includes some of the most hopeful promises in the Bible. Better days are ahead for believers, because a Savior is coming, a New Covenant will be made, and a more committed holy community will be formed. Therefore, it is important to read Jeremiah with hope, for there is always hope for those who serve God faithfully.

During this period (627–587 B.C.) Judah was plagued by spiritual decline, failing leadership, and international imperialism (Egypt and Babylon). Several other prophets' ministries overlapped with Jeremiah's. Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah preached before the Exile, while Ezekiel prophesied mostly after the Exile. God used these prophets to warn Israel to repent before it was too late.

I. Biography

A. Childhood (Jer. 1:1)

1. He is identified as "Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah". While it would be easy to identify his father as Hilkiah, the high priest who served during King Josiah's reign (2 Ki. 22:4ff), this is not likely since the high priest lived in Jerusalem, and Hilkiah was from Anathoth in Benjamin, a Levitical city about 5 miles NE of Jerusalem.
2. They were a family of priests, not unusual for residents of a Levitical city, though in this case the disgraced high priest Abiathar retired to this town after being dismissed by King Solomon (1 Ki. 2:26f). This suggests Anathoth may have been a center for priests as well as Levites, thus providing insight into the thoroughness of Jeremiah's upbringing and preparation for the priesthood.
3. Since the starting age for a priest was twenty years old, and it is doubtful Jeremiah would have been called to his prophetic ministry before entering the priesthood, it is assumed that he was in his early twenties when the Lord called him. Since his call came in the 13th year of Josiah's reign (c. 626 BC), Jeremiah was probably born sometime around 647 BC.

B. Call to ministry (Jer. 1:4-19). God's call of Jeremiah included:

1. A commission (Jer. 1:4-10) in which the Lord:
 - a. Declares Jeremiah to have been uniquely prepared for his ministry before he was born. (Jer. 1:4-5)
 - b. Corrects Jeremiah for thinking his youthfulness would make him unfit for the ministry (Jer. 1:6- 8)
 - c. Empowers Jeremiah with his words to become a truly international prophet (Jer. 1:9-10; where Jeremiah had direct contact with the kings of the Gentile nations).
2. A concise declaration of the message Jeremiah would deliver to Judah (Jer. 1:11-16):
 - a. Two visions which present the swiftness and the source of Judah's coming judgment (Jer. 1:11-13)
 - b. The identity of the executors of God's judgment (the kingdoms of the north-Babylon) (Jer. 1:14-15).
 - c. The reason for the judgment (Judah's relentless idolatry and wickedness) (Jer. 1:16).
3. A charge to be faithful (Jer. 1:17-19):
 - a. Don't be frightened by the people's hard reaction (Jer. 1:17).
 - b. The Lord had made him strong to stand against all the people of Judah, including the king, the princes and the priests (Jer. 1:18)
 - c. The Lord would be with him even when the people were fighting against him to make him stop (Jer. 1:19)

C. Adulthood

1. Called around 626 BC, his prophetic ministry lasted through the reigns of the southern kings Josiah (639-609 BC), Jehoahaz (609 BC), Jehoiakim (609-597 BC), Jehoiachin (597 BC) and Zedekiah (597-586 BC) (Jer. 1:2-3).
2. As implied in his call, Jeremiah's prophetic message of certain impending judgment met with relentless opposition. During his years of ministry he suffered harassment, imprisonment, death threats and public censure (11:21-23; 18:22-23; 20:1-2; 32:1-5; 36:20-26).
3. Jeremiah was by nature introspective and sensitive. Though the Lord endowed him with an iron will and fortress-like fortitude to preach, Jeremiah still regularly expressed his grief for the suffering of his people, and his bewilderment at the severity of God's judgment, particularly in Jer. 1-20 and in the book of Lamentations.

4. Regarding his personal life, Jeremiah was forbidden by the Lord to marry and raise a family (Jer. 16:1-4) because the Lord wished to spare him the inevitable loss of them during His judgment. Additionally, despite his suffering, he was apparently well off financially, for he was able to purchase a deceased relative's property without any apparent hardship (Jer. 32:6ff).
5. While nothing is recorded of Jeremiah's death, he apparently lived for some time after traveling with the exiles to Egypt, and was still alive around 570 BC, since he mentions the impending capture and death of Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar in 569 BC. Thus, Jeremiah lived at least into his early seventies, and died in exile in Egypt.

II. Historical Context

A. Introduction: The reigns of Manasseh and Amon (697-640 BC)

1. The lives of these two kings span the gap between the death of Isaiah (680 BC) and the birth of Jeremiah (647 BC).
2. Manasseh's 55-year reign was marked at first by the grossest wickedness and bloodshed (2 Ki. 21:16). It was because of his sins in Jerusalem that the Lord decided to scatter his rebellious people (Jer. 15:1-5)
3. While Manasseh did repent after a brief exile in Assyria, and he did attempt a religious reform during the last years of his reign (2 Chr. 33:10-16), the effects of his long years of idolatry had taken their toll, sealing the Southern Kingdom's doom, and certainly causing his reprobate son Amon to refuse God's call to repentance and die after only two years on the throne.
4. Jeremiah's formative years would have been spent in the shadow of these wicked kings, growing up only five miles from Jerusalem. As a member of the priesthood, he no doubt would have experienced the deprivations and spiritual hardships suffered by the priests and Levites during such times of apostasy.

B. Josiah's godly reign (640-609 BC)

1. Josiah took the throne when he was eight years old (2 Chr. 34:1). Going against the tide of his father Amon, Josiah began to seek the Lord when he was sixteen, and spent the rest of his life living a zealously godly life.
2. Such a king, with his ongoing reforms and battles against idolatry, would have ushered in a "golden age" for God's priests. Not only would their ongoing ministry be restored at the Temple in Jerusalem, but their lives as spiritual leaders would be vastly improved.

3. Jeremiah's prophetic ministry began a year after Josiah's first great religious purge (2 Chr. 34:3f). Throughout his years ministering to Josiah, Jeremiah experienced unfailing support from the young king, and for the most part returned the support with strong preaching against Judah's wickedness.
4. However, as is evident in Jer. 1-20, Josiah's reforms did little to stem the spiritual malaise, and nothing to stop the impending judgment of God. Indeed, the king's untimely death while fighting an "ill-advised" war with Egypt may have been God's way of both saving Josiah from the consequences of Judah's sins, and of hastening the nation's demise. Regardless, Jeremiah mourned the death of his king and his friend (2 Chr. 35:25).

C. The reigns of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim (609-598 BC)

1. The reigns of these two wicked kings saw both the rise of the Babylonian Empire over the Assyrians, and the beginning of the end for the Southern Kingdom.
2. The return of idolatry and injustice to Judah also saw the rise of the worst opposition against Jeremiah's prophetic ministry (cf. Jer. 11:21-23; 18:22-23; 20:1-2; 32:1-5). Eventually, he was censured and imprisoned by Jehoiakim, forcing him to send his assistant, Baruch, to preach the messages the Lord had given him (cf. Jer. 36), a message promising God's judgment for this continued wickedness, including exile in Babylon.
3. Internationally, Judah was a pawn in the ongoing power struggle between the diminishing Assyrian-Egyptian alliance and the rising Babylonian Empire. Pharaohnecho installed Jehoiakim as king solely because he had shown pro-Egyptian tendencies, and thus could serve as a "first defense" against the encroaching Babylonians.
4. This action led to Nebuchadnezzar's first siege of Jerusalem, and the first carrying away of captives to Babylon, among whom were Daniel and the three Hebrew children. Many commentators believe this is the start of the "70-year exile" prophesied by Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11), and deciphered by Daniel (Dan. 9:1ff), an exile which would end when Cyrus the Persian would allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem in 537/538 BC (cf. Isa. 44:28; 2 Chr. 36:22f; Ezra 1:1ff).

D. The reigns of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah (598-586 BC)

1. Jehoiachin, when confronted with Nebuchadnezzar's second siege of Jerusalem, went out with his mother and the royal family to meet the Babylonian king. Nebuchadnezzar immediately took the young king captive and plundered the city, exiling thousands more to Babylon (2 Ki. 24:11-16)
2. The last earthly kings of Israel, they were noted not so much for wicked opposition as impotent acquiescence and surrender.

3. Zedekiah, installed as king by Nebuchadnezzar, for his part vacillated between loyalty to Jeremiah as God's prophet and to the "pro Egyptian" leaders of Judah who falsely believed (as taught by their "prophets") that the Babylonian tyranny would be overthrown. His brief plot to secure Egyptian support for a rebellion in 588 BC led to the final siege by Nebuchadnezzar, leading to the destruction of Jerusalem and final deportation in 586 BC. During the final days of this siege, Zedekiah attempted to escape to the east, only to be tracked down at Jericho and taken to Babylon (Jer. 39:1-10; 52:1ff).
4. Jeremiah consistently preached against any opposition to the Babylonian invaders, rather counselling the Jews to unconditionally surrender if they wished to see the Lord's blessing in the midst of his chastisement. For this message Jeremiah was openly challenged (Jer. 28:1-17), publicly rebuked (Jer. 29:1-32), beaten and imprisoned (Jer. 37:11-21), and accused of treason (Jer. 38:1-13). However, nothing deterred him from his divinely appointed message, and because of this Zedekiah sought his advice right up to the end (Jer. 38:14-28).

E. The fall of Jerusalem and Exile in Babylon and Egypt (586-535 BC)

1. Once Jerusalem was taken the Babylonians treated Jeremiah courteously, allowing him to decide where he wished to go (Jer. 39:11-14).
2. Entrusted to Gedaliah, the governor Nebuchadnezzar appointed over Judah, within two months Jeremiah found himself being taken to Egypt by a rebellious remnant of Jews after Gedaliah was assassinated (Jer. 42:1-43:7).
3. In Egypt Jeremiah continued to warn the rebels that, even in their seemingly safe haven, the Lord would bring judgment to them when Nebuchadnezzar came south to attack Egypt (Jer. 43:8-14).
4. Concerning the exiles in Babylon, Jeremiah wrote a letter to the Jewish leaders there advising them to submit to the Babylonians (Jer. 29:1-23), knowing that the Lord would end the exile in seventy years and restore His people to their land.
5. Although not recorded in Scripture, it is generally believed Jeremiah died around 570 BC while in forced exile in Egypt.

Jeremiah Summary Outline

- I. Introduction (Ch. 1)
 - A. His priestly pedigree (1:1)
 - B. His time of ministry (1:2-3)
 - C. His call to ministry (1:4-19)

- II. Sermons to Judah (Ch. 2-45)
 - A. National sermons (Ch. 2-20)
 - B. Narrative sermons (Ch. 21-45)

- III. Sermons on the nations (Ch. 46-51)
 - A. Word against Egypt (Ch. 46)
 - B. Words against Israel's neighbors (Ch. 47-49)
 - C. Words against Babylon (Ch. 50-51)

- IV. Postscript: The fall of Jerusalem (Ch. 52)
 - A. Zedekiah's rebellious reign (52:1-3)
 - B. Jerusalem captured (52:4-7)
 - C. Zedekiah's captivity (52:8-11)
 - D. Jerusalem sacked (52:12-23)
 - E. The Jews carried away (52:24-30)
 - F. Mercy to Jehoiachin (52:31-34)

Outline of Jeremiah

I. Introduction (Ch. 1)

Chapter 1 Summary: Jeremiah prophesied from the days of Josiah to the captivity. In Jeremiah 1, Jeremiah declares that, even before he was born, God chose him and appointed him to be a prophet to the nations. The Lord shows Jeremiah that He will use kingdoms from the north to bring judgment upon the Israelites. God commands Jeremiah to speak of what He shows him, and not to be afraid of the opposition he will face, because God will protect him.

A. His priestly pedigree (1:1)

Jeremiah was born in approximately 648 B.C. and grew up in the village of Anathoth, about two miles from Jerusalem.

B. His time of ministry (1:2-3)

C. His call to ministry (1:4-19)

1. God's commission (1:4-10). He was probably about 20-year-old when God called him. Two-thirds of his ministry is negative.
2. God's message (1:11-16). He was to preach 3 themes: sin, punishment, and restoration.
3. God's charge (1:17-19). God did not deceive Jeremiah about the difficulty of his task. In fact, God said Jeremiah's opponents would include every strata of Judah's society—prophets, priests, people, and royalty, but God would protect him. He must not be afraid.

II. Sermons to Judah (Ch. 2-45)

A. National sermons (Ch. 2-20). Development of God's man (under Josiah) (Map 77)

1. Message to Jerusalem (2:1-3:5)

Chapter 2 Summary: In Jeremiah 2, the prophet declares that the Israelites have forsaken God, who rescued them from captivity in Egypt, and brought them into the Promised Land. They did not seek God, but, instead, sought other gods of their own creation, and put their trust in Assyria or Egypt to help them. They have rebelled against God, and not responded to His discipline.

a. God addresses Jeremiah (2:1-3)

b. God's declaration of Israel's unfaithfulness (2:4-3:5)

- 1) Failure in leadership (2:4-8). Despite all God's kindnesses, the people have turned to idols. Priests, people, prophets, and kings alike have forgotten God's great acts in Israel's history. Vs 8 – priests didn't know God – today the same with many pastors.
- 2) Forsaking God (2:9-13). God charges Israel with desertion.

- 3) Result of forsaking God (2:14-19). Because of their sins, the Lord has allowed other countries to take property and territory from Israel.
- 4) Israel's stubbornness (2:20-30). Israel refused to repent. V. 22 – soap can't clean sin.
- 5) Israel's self-deception (2:31-37). They refused to admit they did anything wrong.

Chapter 3 Summary: In Jeremiah 3, the Israelite's idolatry is likened to adultery. Although God 'divorced' the northern kingdom, allowing her to be conquered by her enemies, the southern kingdom of Judah has not learnt from this. They are hypocritical, outwardly say "the LORD" going through the religious motions, but they continue their idolatry in their heart and actions. If they acknowledge their guilt, God will give them shepherds after His own heart.

- 6) Call to return to God (3:1-5). Israel tried to retain God's blessings while loving other gods. This impossible scenario defiled the land. God must punish this behavior.
2. Message during Josiah's reign (3:6-6:30)
- a. Israel and Judah compared (3:6-11). God told the prophet that Israel and Judah have worshiped idols. This behavior continued for centuries. Therefore, God sent Assyria to conquer Israel, the ten northern tribes, in 722 B.C. Over a century has passed, but Judah has learned nothing from watching God's judgment on Israel. Vs. 10 - feignedly
 - b. God's promised restoration for Israel's repentance (3:12-4:4)
 - 1) Restoration described (3:12-19). If Judah will acknowledge, confess, and return to God, then the Lord will forgive. But a fresh start is dependent on a change of heart.
 - 2) Repentance required (3:20-25)

Chapter 4 Summary: Jeremiah 4 is a prophecy about the imminent invasion of Judah from the north by the Babylonians. The Israelites have brought this invasion and devastation of the land upon themselves, because they rebelled against God.

- 3) Renewed call to repentance (4:1-4). No one can repent without a changed heart. Therefore, God's demands for change are linked to the people "circumcising their hearts", a metaphor implying a heart fully devoted to God.
- c. God's promised judgment for Judah's impenitence (4:5-31)
- 1) Promise of destruction by Babylon (4:5-9)
 - 2) Jeremiah's interjection (4:10)

- 3) Reason for the destruction (4:11-18). It is time for the nation to admit that its social, economic, and military difficulties are a direct result of rebellion against the Lord.
- 4) Jeremiah (God?) mourns over Judah's destruction (4:19-31). God will not destroy Judah all at once. Smaller punishments will come first to encourage the nation to return to God. Refusing to heed early warnings will lead to Judah's destruction.

d. Judah's determined wickedness (Ch. 5)

Chapter 5 Summary: Jeremiah 5 is a continuation of the prophecy concerning the invasion of Judah. Neither the people nor the leaders, who should instruct the people, know or follow the way of the Lord. There is no fear of the Lord. The prophets lie, and say that disaster will not befall them, and the priest's rule by their own authority. The land will be devastated, and the Israelites taken into captivity in a foreign land.

- 1) Jeremiah's unsuccessful search for godly men (5:1-6). This passage is reminiscent of what God told Abraham regarding Sodom and Gommorah (Gen. 18:16-33). As was the case with Sodom, there are too few righteous persons in Judah to withhold judgment. The land is filled with dishonesty, religious hypocrisy, and injustice.
- 2) God's determination (5:7-9)
- 3) God's promise of destruction by Babylon (5:10-18)
- 4) Reasons for the destruction (5:19-31)
 - a) Idolatry (5:19-24)
 - b) Injustice (5:25-29). Verse 25 – your sins have withholden good things from you.
 - c) Irreverence (5:30-31). When spiritual leaders don't tell their people God's truth, it's like a physician giving a clean bill of health to someone with a serious disease. Only the consequences are far more severe.

e. God's promised judgment (Ch. 6)

Chapter 6 Summary: Jeremiah 6 concludes the prophecy that Judah will be invaded and devastated by an invasion from the north. The invading armies will besiege Jerusalem and destroy it. The prophets and priests are deceitful, and declare that there is peace, when there is no peace. The Israelites refuse to follow the ancient paths or listen to the warnings given by the watchmen. Because of their rebellious ways, their sacrifices and offerings are unacceptable to God.

- 1) God promises destruction to Jerusalem (6:1-5). Because Judah fails to repent, they should prepare for a foreign army to terrorize them.

- 2) Jerusalem described (6:6-8). Jerusalem has become known more for wickedness than for being a city of righteousness.
- 3) Judah's stubbornness (6:9-17). Why did Judah refuse to change? Chiefly because they did not value God's word. Instead, they were greedy for gain, eager for soothing sermons, and unashamed of their activities. Vs 16 – good verse.
- 4) God promises destruction to Judah (6:18-25)
- 5) Final words (6:26-30). the Lord will determine their future by how well they respond to Jeremiah's messages. Their greatest test is whether they believe the messenger whom God has sent.

3. Message at the Temple (Ch. 7-10)

Chapter 7 Summary: Jeremiah 7 is a rebuke to the Israelites for trusting in deceptive words, and believing they are safe, when they are not following the ways of God. They have not learnt any lessons from what happened to Shiloh. (The original place of worship destroyed by the Philistines in 1050 BC.) The Israelites provoke God's anger by their practice of idolatry and worship of false gods. Because they have not responded to correction, and truth has perished, disaster will come.

- a. Initial sermon/God's call to repent (7:1-15)
 - 1) Call and promise (7:1-7). God positioned Jeremiah at the Temple gate so the prophet could confront those who came to services there.
 - 2) Sin and judgment (7:8-15). They believed that God would not allow His Temple to be destroyed. But God reminded the people that He abandoned Shiloh, the place where the tabernacle stood (7:12).
- b. Judah's sins (7:16-8:17)
 - 1) Idolatry (7:16-20). Judah's sins were so terrible that God told the prophet not to intercede for them.
 - 2) Rejection of God's Word (7:21-8:3). Mere external religious rites do not impress God. God knew that the people would not pay attention to Jeremiah's sermons.

Chapter 8 Summary: In Jeremiah 8, the prophet laments what will happen when Israel is overcome by her enemies. These enemies will be like venomous snakes, who will desecrate the graves of the dead, and take the Israelites into captivity in a distant land, where they will mourn over what has befallen them. Jeremiah declares that the priests and prophets are behaving deceitfully by falsifying the word of God, and not looking after the people. There is no repentance of sin.

- 3) Refusal to do right (8:4-17). Part of the people's problem in obeying the Law was that their teachers did not teach it faithfully or properly. There was no hope for Judah if they continued to insist on listening to falsehood instead of heeding God's warnings.

c. The prophet's sorrow (8:18-10:25)

- 1) Jeremiah's anguish (8:18-9:8). There can be no question that Jeremiah loved his people and wished they would be saved.

Chapter 9 Summary: In Jeremiah 9, the prophet weeps over the spiritual condition of the nation. He declares that the Lord will punish, test and refine Israel, because she has forsaken His law. Jerusalem will be destroyed, and the people scattered amongst the nations. The people boast about their own wisdom, strength and wealth, rather than boasting about their relationship with God. Salvation and help does not come through physical circumcision, but through circumcision of the heart.

2) God's answer (9:9-26)

- a) Judgment is necessary (9:9-16)
- b) Who should be mourning? (9:17-22). Jerusalem will be reduced to a heap of rubble. Shame will lead to tears, wailing, and regret by the people.
- c) A wise man would understand (9:23-24). Rather than boasting of money and power, they ought to revel in knowing the Lord.
- d) Judah is no better than the Gentiles (9:25-26)

Chapter 10 Summary: In Jeremiah 10, the prophet describes the futility of creating and worshipping worthless idols. The Lord who created the heavens and the earth is the only true, living and eternal God. Judgement will come upon Israel because of her idolatry, and the people will be removed from the land. The shepherds have not followed the Lord, and so their flocks will be scattered.

3) God's defense (10:1-18)

- a) Warning against idolatry (10:1-6). Vs. 2 – learn not the way of the heathen.
- b) Jeremiah acknowledges God's character (10:7-10)
- c) God is greater than idols (10:11-16). The people's choice was either worship the Creator or worship the idols their own hands have made.
- d) Judgment promised (10:17-18). God will throw sinful Judah out of the land for their idolatry. Much of the blame for Judah's demise lay with their leaders, who had led the people away from God.

- 4) Jeremiah's plea for mercy (10:19-25). Jeremiah himself searched his own heart and asked the Lord to correct him but to do so gently. He did not want to perish with Judah and the other nations that rejected the Lord.

!0:23-24 – good verse

4. Message on the Covenant (Ch. 11-13)

Chapter 11 Summary: In Jeremiah 11, God rebukes Israel for breaking His covenant with them by not obeying Him, and by returning to the sins of their fore-fathers. As a consequence of their idolatry, disaster will come upon them. Because they are burning incense to Baal, God tells Jeremiah not to even pray for them, and that He will not listen to them. Jeremiah rebukes the men of Anathoth, who were plotting to kill him, and declares that they will all be destroyed.

a. Initial sermon (11:1-17)

- 1) Judah's offense (11:1-10). Disobedience.
- 2) God's judgment (11:11-17). They must leave the land God gave them.

b. Jeremiah's laments/God's answers (11:18-12:17)

- 1) Lament (11:18-20). Jeremiah's life was threatened by men from his hometown. If God had not revealed their plot and protected him, the prophet would have died.
- 2) Answer (11:21-23)

Chapter 12 Summary: In Jeremiah 12, the prophet asks God why the wicked seem to prosper, and when judgement will come upon them. God replies that, for a time, He will abandon His inheritance, and give Israel into the hands of her enemies. Israel will become a desolate wasteland, like a trampled down vineyard which bears no fruit. Israel and her neighbours will be uprooted, but God will re-establish them in their lands. However, those nations who do not listen to God will again be uprooted and destroyed.

- 3) Lament (12:1-4). Vs 2 – near in the mouth, far from the heart/mind
- 4) Answer (12:5-6). God challenged Jeremiah to prepare for worse times
- 5) Lament (12:7-13)
- 6) Answer (12:14-17). God punishes in order to restore and renew.

c. The marred girdle (Ch. 13)

Chapter 13 Summary: In Jeremiah 13, The Lord tells Jeremiah to place his girdle in the hole of a rock at the Euphrates. After being exposed to dampness and soil, it becomes marred. It is an example of what will happen to Judah because of her pride and wickedness. Because of her stubbornness and many sins, she will be shamefully exposed and taken into exile. Those with whom she has made a peace treaty will rule over her.

- 1) The object lesson (13:1-7)
- 2) The illustration (13:8-11). Judah is a ruined nation due to idolatry. God's people have earned the punishment that must surely come upon them.
- 3) The sermon (13:12-27). Even after all God has said about Judah's inevitable collapse, the prophet still sought to turn the people's hearts.

5. Message concerning the dearth (Ch. 14-17)

a. Cycle one (Ch. 14-15)

Chapter 14 Summary: In Jeremiah 14, God declares that He will not respond to prayers offered during a time of severe drought, because the nation has turned away from Him, and they only seek help when they want something from Him. The prophets are lying when they tell the people that famine and disaster will not come upon them. Jeremiah repents before God on behalf of Judah, acknowledging the wickedness of both the current and previous generations.

- 1) The dearth described (14:1-6). Punishment began with a terrible drought.
- 2) Jeremiah's prayer for mercy (14:7-9). He asked God to relent.
- 3) God promises judgment (14:10-12). God refused to do so, He had already decided to chastise the rebellious nation and their lying prophets and priests.
- 4) Jeremiah intercedes (14:13-22). This decision moved Jeremiah to pray anyways.

Chapter 15 Summary: In Jeremiah 15, God responds to the prophet's prayer concerning the drought being experienced in Judah. God declares that He would not even respond to the prayers of Moses or Samuel, because of the sins of Manasseh (who brought idolatry and Baal worship into the temple). The nation will be destroyed, and the people enslaved. The people will reject, and fight against, Jeremiah, but God will protect him.

- 5) God's promised judgment (15:1-9)
- 6) Jeremiah's concern (15:10-21)

- a) His lament (15:10-18). A lament is a complaint offered in faith. Rather than accept the Lord's response to his earnest intercession, Jeremiah chose to lament his own role in life. Although he had tried to help the people, they despised him.
- b) God's promise (15:19-21). God promised Jeremiah that if he would remain faithful, God would make Jeremiah like a bronze wall. The people might fight against him, but they would not prevail.

b. Cycle two (Ch. 16-17)

1) God promises death and exile (Ch. 16)

Chapter 16 Summary: In Jeremiah 16, God tells Jeremiah not to marry or have children, because of the suffering and death which will come upon the nation during his lifetime. The Israelites will be removed from the land because of their rebellion and idolatry. God declares, however, that they will be restored to the land, coming back from the north and all the other countries where they have been banished. This restoration will be seen to be as great a miracle as their deliverance from Egypt.

- a) Israel's deaths (16:1-9)
- b) Israel's sin (16:10-13)
- c) Exile and return (16:14-15)
- d) God's purpose (16:16-21)

Chapter 17 Summary: In Jeremiah 17, the prophet proclaims that Judah's sin is inscribed on the hearts of the people. Their hearts are deceitful, and God will search their hearts, and reward them according to their deeds. But, blessed is the man who puts his trust in God rather than man. God instructs Jeremiah to go to the gates of Jerusalem and declare that destruction will come upon the city, if the people refuse to obey God, and dishonor Him by breaking the Sabbath regulations, and not keeping the Sabbath day holy.

2) God talks with Jeremiah (17:1-18)

- a) God's observations (17:1-11). Vs 5, Vs 9 are popular verses.
- b) Jeremiah's concern (17:12-18)

3) God's word to the kings of Judah (17:19-27). For more than 800 years, Israel lived with God's command to rest on the Sabbath, but they failed to obey it.

6. The Potter sermons (Ch. 18-20)

a. Potter Sermon I (Ch. 18)

Chapter 18 Summary: In Jeremiah 18, the prophet goes to the potter's house and compares the work of the potter to the way in which God shapes and directs the affairs of the nations on earth. Unless Judah turns from her wicked ways and stubbornness of heart, God will bring disaster upon her. Jeremiah asks God to bring judgement on those who have plotted against him and tried to kill him, in order to stop him speaking out the words God has given him.

- 1) The potter's vessel (18:1-10). Vs. 4 – marred in the hand, not by the hand
- 2) God promises judgment (18:11-17)
- 3) Jeremiah's lament (18:18-23). The people ignored the prophet's words and slandered him because they preferred to believe their religious leaders, all of whom thought the people were fine.

b. Potter Sermon II (Ch. 19-20)

Chapter 19 Summary: In Jeremiah 19, the prophet is instructed to go to Ben Hinnom (the place where King Ahaz and King Manasseh had set up an altar and carried out child sacrifices to Molech). There he smashes a clay pot and declares that this is what God will do to Israel, because of her rebellion and sin. An enemy will lay siege against them, and they will be so desperate for food that some will even become cannibalistic.

- 1) Sermon at Hinnom (19:1-15). , Jeremiah presented Judah as a jar that would, in fact, be shattered. A foreign army would lay siege to Jerusalem and destroy it. Individuals may still repent, but the nation as a whole had run out of time.

Chapter 20 Summary: In Jeremiah 20, Pashhur, the chief priest, has Jeremiah beaten and placed in the stocks, because of what he is prophesying. Jeremiah responds by telling Pashhur that he will be taken into exile and die in a foreign land. Although he faces persecution and ridicule, Jeremiah declares that he is compelled to speak out God's words, which are like a burning fire within him. He gives thanks that God is with him, and will rescue him from his persecutors.

- 2) Pashur (20:1-6).
- 3) Jeremiah's lament (20:7-18). Vs 9 – Jeremiah wanted to quit, but could not.

B. Narrative sermons (Ch. 21-45). Diligence of God's man (under Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah) (Map 78)

1. Words warning of coming judgment (Ch. 21-25)

The book of Jeremiah often jumps from one time frame to another, all the while expecting the reader to keep up with the changes. Of course, the original readers had no problem doing so, but today's readers need to be careful not to lose track of a passage's historical context.

a. Sermons during Zedekiah's reign (Ch. 21-24)

Chapter 21 Summary: Jeremiah 21 records how King Zedekiah asks Jeremiah for a word from God, when Jerusalem is being attacked by the Babylonians, led by King Nebuchadnezzar. God declares through Jeremiah that Jerusalem will be destroyed by fire. Many will die of starvation or plague, or be killed by the sword of the Babylonians. King Zedekiah, and any of the leaders or people who survive the destruction of the city, will be taken into captivity.

1) Words to the delegation (Ch. 21)

- a) For Zedekiah (21:1-7)
- b) For the people (21:8-10)
- c) For the house of the king of Judah (21:11-14)

Chapter 22 Summary: Jeremiah 22 records prophecies about the three kings who succeeded King Josiah. King Jehoahaz (Shallum), who had been taken into captivity in Egypt, will never return. King Jehoiakim, who was more concerned about building himself a palace than seeking justice for the poor and the oppressed, will be disgraced and no one will mourn his death. (He will be taken to Babylon in chains.) King Jehoiachin will be taken into exile in Babylon.

2) Words for the king's house (Ch. 22). The four last kings of Judah

- a) For the king (Zedekiah) (22:1-9)
- b) For Shallum (Jehoahaz) (22:10-12)
- c) For Jehoiakim (22:13-19)
- d) For Coniah (Jeconiah) (22:20-30)

Chapter 23 Summary: In Jeremiah 23, God declares that the prophet and priests are failing in their duties, and will be punished. God Himself will gather His scattered sheep, and place caring and faithful shepherds over them. He will raise up a Davidic king to rule over them. God declares that He is against the godless prophets, who claim to be speaking the words of God, but are only speaking out of their own imagination, and lead the people astray by giving them false hope.

3) Word for the false prophets (Ch. 23)

- a) God's plan for the prophets and His people (23:1-8)
- b) God's case against the prophets (23:9-32). Jeremiah now directed his messages at prophets who did not tell Judah the truth about their sins and the consequences of those sins. These prophets preached for monetary gain.

Vs 14, 28 – prophets lie... same with many pastors and cause many to err.

Vs 29 – Good verse

- c) God's judgment on the prophets (23:33-40). God would send them out of the land with the corrupt kings.

4) The fig sermon (Ch. 24)

Chapter 24 Summary: Jeremiah 24 records a vision in which the prophet sees two baskets of figs. The good figs represent the good exiles taken into Babylon along with King Jehoiachin. God will watch over them, and they will return to the land. The bad figs represent King Zedekiah and his officials who took over from King Jehoiachin, and became even more unfaithful towards God. God declares that they will be punished by plague, famine and sword, and become an object of ridicule.

a) The vision (24:1-3)

- i. Setting (24:1). This passage refers to the time about 605 B.C., when Babylon first gained control over Judah. At this time the Babylonians took several Judaites captive, including such promising young leaders as Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.
- ii. Content (24:2-3). Jeremiah was given a vision of two baskets of figs, one good and one bad.

b) The interpretation (24:4-10)

- i. Good figs (24:4-7). God declared that the good figs, the ones God favored, were the Jews who had gone to Babylon.
- ii. Bad figs (24:8-10). The bad figs that the Lord condemned were the Judaites who remained in the Promised Land.

- iii. God promised to bless the exiles, but those who stayed in Judah and sinned against the Lord would suffer worse punishment than those who had gone into exile.

b. Sermon during Jehoiakim's reign (Ch. 25)

Chapter 25 Summary: Jeremiah 25 records a prophecy given during the reign of King Jehoiakim. For twenty-three years, God's warnings, given through Jeremiah, have been ignored. Therefore, God now declares that He will use the Babylonians and King Nebuchadnezzar to bring judgement and devastation upon Israel and the surrounding nations. These nations will become subject to the Babylonians for seventy years, before the Babylonians themselves are judged and overcome by other nations and great kings.

- 1) Summary of rebellion (25:1-7). Jeremiah stated that he had been preaching God's word for twenty-three years, yet the nation had paid no attention.
- 2) Judgment assured (25:8-14). Babylon had exiled a number of the populace, and more telling defeats were to come. Indeed, the Babylonians would destroy Judah and take the rest of the people into exile. There they would stay for seventy years.
- 3) Jeremiah's vision (25:15-33). Small and great countries alike would fall to the Babylonians
- 4) Woe to the shepherds (25:34-38)

2. Jeremiah vs. false prophets (Ch. 26-29)

a. During Jehoiakim's reign (Ch. 26)

Chapter 26 Summary: Jeremiah 26 records another prophecy given during the reign of King Jehoiakim, declaring that the temple and Jerusalem will be destroyed, if the Israelites continue in their disobedience. The priests and the other prophets want to put Jeremiah to death, as they had done to the prophet Uriah. Uriah had fled to Egypt but the king's men captured him and brought before the king who had him killed. The court officials, however, defend Jeremiah, saying he should not be killed, because he has only spoken out the words which God has given him, just as Micah had done during the reign of Hezekiah.

- 1) Another sermon (26:1-7). The source of Judah's spiritual and moral problems: their priests and prophets.
- 2) Judah responds (26:8-24)
 - a) People's anger (26:8-9)

- b) Prophets' accusation (26:10-11)
- c) Jeremiah's defense (26:12-15)
- d) Princes' debate (26:16-23). In an unexpected scenario, Jeremiah was spared death when the elders of the land remembered the truthful, though negative, words Micah had spoken against Jerusalem one hundred years earlier ([Mic. 3:12](#)). At that time the nation listened and repented. Oddly, though the elders cited this previous episode, no repentance resulted from this exchange.
- e) Ahikam's protection (26:24)

b. During Zedekiah's reign (Ch. 27-28)

1) Words to the nation (Ch. 27)

Chapter 27 Summary: Jeremiah 27 records how God instructs Jeremiah to wear a yoke around his neck to symbolise what will happen to Israel and the surrounding nations. They will become subject to the rule of the Babylonians. If they resist and listen to the lies of the false prophets, who say this will not happen, their lands will be devastated and the people banished from the land. The prophets of Judah are lying when they say that the articles from the temple, taken by Nebuchadnezzar, will soon be returned.

- a) Sermon to the foreign ambassadors (27:1-11)
- b) Sermon to Zedekiah (27:12-15)
- c) Sermon to the priests and people (27:16-22)

2) Hananiah responds (Ch. 28)

Chapter 28 Summary: Jeremiah 28 records how the prophet Hananiah breaks the wooden yoke which God instructed Jeremiah to wear. He declares that God will break the yoke of the King of Babylon, and within two years Jehoiachin and the exiles, who have already been taken into captivity, will return. Jeremiah declares that Hananiah is lying, and that, instead of a wooden yoke, the Babylonian yoke will be a yoke of iron. Jeremiah correctly prophesies that Hananiah will die, because he is preaching rebellion against God.

- a) Hananiah confronts Jeremiah (28:1-11)
- b) The Lord confronts Hananiah (28:12-17). Jeremiah told Hananiah that Babylon's grip on Judah was like iron. There was no chance that Israel would escape. Further, Hananiah would die for his misleading words to the people. Just as Jeremiah promised, Hananiah died.

c. Letter to the elders in Babylon (Ch. 29)

Chapter 29 Summary: Jeremiah 29 records a letter sent by Jeremiah to the Israelites who had already been taken into exile in Babylon, during the reign of King Jehoiachin. He tells them not to believe the lies of Shemaiah, and the other prophets, who say they will shortly return to Jerusalem. He declares that, in accordance with God's plans and purposes, they will be in Babylon for seventy years, so build houses, have children, and settle the land. He further declares that God is about to bring the sword, famine and plague against the land of Judah.

1) Call to obey (29:1-14)

- a) Settle in Babylon (29:1-7). The exile would last 70 years.
- b) Ignore false prophets (29:8-9)
- c) Promise of deliverance (29:10-14). Vs 29-14a is good to memorize.

2) Warnings against disobedience (29:15-32)

- a) Fate of lying people (29:15-19)
- b) Fate of lying prophets (29:20-23)
- c) Fate of Shemaiah (29:24-32)

3. Words of restoration (Ch. 30-33)

a. The word written in the book (Ch. 30-31)

Chapter 30 Summary: Jeremiah 30 is a prophecy relating to the restoration of Israel. The nations among whom the Israelites will be scattered will eventually be destroyed. God will discipline the people of Israel and Judah, and, although they will experience difficult times, (described as the time of trouble when there is fear and no peace), God will bring them back to the land He promised their forefathers. There they will serve God, and the Davidic king, whom God will raise up.

1) The end of the exile (30:1-17)

- a) The yoke will be broken (30:1-9). God would bring them back to Palestine.
- b) The chastisement will end (30:10-17). The just God was also a forgiving and saving God.

2) The return of the people (30:18-31:26)

- a) God's promise (30:18-24). With the populace restored to the land and their foes driven out, the Lord would proceed to help the Israelites rebuild Jerusalem and the country's other cities.

Chapter 31 Summary: Jeremiah 31 continues the prophecy relating to the end time restoration of Israel. God proclaims that the descendants of Israel will never cease to be a nation before Him. He will bring back the Israelites from the land of the north, and from the ends of the earth, where they have been scattered. God declares that He will make a new covenant with Israel, and His law will be written on their hearts. They will all know Him, and God will forgive their wickedness, and remember their sin no more.

- b) God's work (31:1-9). With punishment over, though, the Lord would once again forge a faithful group of servants.
- c) God's call (31:10-26)
 - i. To the nations (31:10-14)
 - ii. To Rachel (31:15-17)
 - iii. To Ephraim (31:18-21)
 - iv. To the backsliding daughter (31:22-26)
 - v. God's love would energize the broken sinners; God's grace would make them pure again.
- 3) "Behold, the days come" (31:27-40)
 - a) The return (31:27-30). In days to come the Lord would be as careful to bless Israel as he had been to punish them.
 - b) The new covenant (31:31-37). God would place this law directly on the people's hearts. Only believers would be counted as God's people. It would be eternal.
Vs. 31-34 is quoted in the NT in Hebrews 8:8-12.
 - c) The city rebuilt (31:38-40)

b. Two words under Zedekiah (Ch. 32-33)

1) Word in the tenth year of Zedekiah (Ch. 32)

Chapter 32 Summary: Jeremiah 32 records how Jeremiah buys some land from his cousin, despite the fact that the Babylonians have surrounded Jerusalem and are about to devastate the city and take the Israelites into captivity. God declares that these disasters have occurred because of their sins and the sins of their ancestors. God also declares that He will bring the Israelites back, and that they will again buy and sell land. God will make a new everlasting covenant with His people.

- a) Zedekiah's threat (32:1-5). Babylon's third and final siege (c. 588-587 BC)
- b) Jeremiah's illogical investment (32:6-25)

- i. Purchase (32:6-12). God told the prophet to buy some property.
 - ii. Purpose (32:13-15). Though it did not seem so, it was a good long-term investment as the God said the people in exile will return.
 - iii. Prayer (32:16-25)
- c) God's plan for Jerusalem (32:26-44)
- i. Destruction (32:26-35). Vs 32:27 is a good verse.
 - ii. Deliverance (32:36-44). To prove that "nothing is impossible with God," the Lord would bring the people back to the land. Then, the Lord would be their God, and they would be His people. God would give them new hearts and an everlasting covenant. God would bring as much good to them as He had brought punishment, and at that time, land would be bought and sold again.

2) The word in prison (Ch. 33)

Chapter 33 Summary: Jeremiah 33 records another prophecy, in which God declares that Jerusalem will be devastated by the Babylonians, but that He will bring back Israel and Judah from their captivity and restore the fortunes of the land. God reaffirms His promise that He will raise up a righteous leader from the line of David who will be called 'The Lord our Righteousness'. God declares that His covenants and promises are as certain and as unchanging as the physical laws that govern the universe.

- a) Restoration (33:1-9). God gave His word that Israel's sins would be forgiven and that they would enjoy peace and prosperity. Vs. 3 – is a good verse.
- b) Repopulation (33:10-14)
- c) Reinstatement (33:15-18). David will have an heir on the throne forever, just as was promised in [2 Samuel 7:1-17](#).
- d) Resolution (33:19-26)

4. Events regarding the fall of Jerusalem (Ch. 34-45)

a. Before the fall of Jerusalem (Ch. 34-36)

Chapter 34 Summary: Jeremiah 34 records a prophecy, given when Judea was being invaded by the Babylonians, in which God declares that Jerusalem will be defeated, and King Zedekiah taken into captivity. God rebukes the Israelites for enslaving fellow Israelites, despite saying they would not do this. They have broken covenant with God, and, as a consequence, they will be handed over to their enemies.

- 1) The word that came when Nebuchadnezzar fought against Jerusalem (34:1-7)
- 2) The word that came to Zedekiah (34:8-22)
 - a) The rulers' deception (34:8-11)
 - b) God's answer (34:12-22)
 - i. Their sin (34:12-16). God promised that the king would not be killed in the invasion. David's lineage would survive, albeit in exile.
 - ii. Their judgment (34:17-22). During the Babylonian invasion, the Israelites set their servants free. When the immediate threat passed, however, they enslaved their countrymen. This lack of compassion for others and lack of obedience to God was all too typical. The nation was "faithful" only when it was convenient. Their hypocrisy was evident, and their punishment was inevitable.

3) The word which came in the days of Jehoiakim (Ch. 35)

Chapter 35 Summary: In Jeremiah 35, the Rechabites are praised for faithfully following the commands of their fore-fathers to not drink and to lead a nomadic lifestyle. God contrasts their faithfulness to Israel's unfaithfulness in not obeying God, despite the fact that God has spoken to them many times through the prophets.

- a) Tempting the Rechabites (35:1-11)
- b) Preaching the Rechabites (35:12-17)
- c) Blessing the Rechabites (35:18-19)

4) In the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Ch. 36)

Chapter 36 Summary: In Jeremiah 36, God instructs Jeremiah to write on a scroll all the prophecies he has received, concerning the disasters which will come upon Israel. Jeremiah dictates the prophecies to Baruch, who then reads them in the temple. When the temple officials read the scroll to King Jehoiakim, he burns the scroll, and orders that Jeremiah be arrested. Jeremiah, however, who is in hiding, re-writes the scroll, and condemns King Jehoiakim for his actions.

- a) The book is prepared (36:1-8). Jeremiah had Baruch dictate his sermon and asked him to read it at the house of the Lord.
- b) The book is read (36:9-19)
- c) The book is burned (36:20-26). When the king heard the scroll read to him, he cut it up and tossed it on the fire.
- d) The book is restored (36:27-32). He dictated another scroll.

b. During the fall of Jerusalem (Ch. 37-39)

1). Zedekiah reigns instead of Coniah (Jeconiah) (Ch. 37-38)

Chapter 37 Summary: Jeremiah 37 records that, during the reign of King Zedekiah, the Babylonians, who were attacking Jerusalem, withdrew for a time, when the Egyptian army marched against them. Jeremiah, however, prophesies that the Babylonians will return and destroy the city. Jeremiah is accused of trying to desert to the Babylonians, and is arrested, beaten and imprisoned in a dungeon for a long time, before the king allows him to be kept under guard in the prison courtyard.

- a) The word against Jerusalem (37:1-10)
- b) Jeremiah imprisoned (37:11-15). He was falsely accused of deserting to the Babylonians. Despite his protestations, he was jailed.
- c) Zedekiah meets Jeremiah (37:16-21). The king asked him what God said about the future, and once again Jeremiah told him the sad truth.

Chapter 38 Summary: In Jeremiah 38, Jeremiah is imprisoned in a muddy well for speaking out the words of the Lord that the Babylonians will defeat Jerusalem, and that those who stay in the city will die by the sword, famine or plague. Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian, gets the king's permission to take him out. In a secret meeting with the king, Jeremiah tells him that he and his family will be spared, and Jerusalem not destroyed if he surrenders to the Babylonians. The king, however, is too fearful of the Jews to do this.

- d) Jeremiah in the dungeon (38:1-6). His crime was telling the truth to the people.
- e) Ebed-melech rescues Jeremiah (38:7-13). An Ethiopian serving in Zedekiah's court believing Jeremiah the victim of wicked men, Ebed-Melech boldly petitioned the king on Jeremiah's behalf. The king agreed that the prophet should be released.
- f) Zedekiah confers with Jeremiah (38:14-28)
 - i. Zedekiah's inquiry (38:14-16)
 - ii. God's answer (38:17-23). Later the king asked a word from God, and heard Jeremiah proclaim the same, old message. Israel might as well surrender, for God would not save them from their foe.
 - iii. Jeremiah's ruse (38:24-28). Zedekiah's way to protect Jeremiah.

2) Jerusalem falls to Nebuchadnezzar (Ch. 39) (Map 79)

Chapter 39 Summary: Jeremiah 39 records how Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, following a siege which lasted eighteen months. King Zedekiah tries to escape but is captured. His children are killed, and he is blinded and taken into captivity, along with the people who have stayed in Jerusalem. The Babylonians set fire to the buildings and break down the city walls. Jeremiah is freed by the Babylonians, in accordance with the word of the Lord, because he has put his trust in God. Ebed-melech is also spared.

- a) The city overthrown (39:1-10). Finally the terrible day arrived. The city fell.
- b) Jeremiah released (39:11-14)
- c) Ebed-melech (39:15-18; cf. 38:7f). Both Jeremiah and Ebed-melech learned that God protects those who trust in Him (vs 18).

c. After the fall of Jerusalem (Ch. 40-45) (Map 81)

1) The word that came after Nebuzaradan let Jeremiah go (Ch. 40-43)

Chapter 40 Summary: In Jeremiah 40, Jeremiah is given the choice to either go into exile in Babylon, or to stay in Judah with Gedaliah, whom the Babylonians have appointed as governor. When they hear that the Babylonians have allowed a remnant to stay in the land, some of the Jews, who fled into other nations, return to Judah. Although warned that Ishmael (one of his army officers), is planning to kill him, Gedaliah does not believe it, and takes no action against him.

- a) Jeremiah freed (40:1-6). He chose to remain among his own people rather than to go to Babylon with the conquerors.
- b) Fight for control in Judah (40:7-41:18)
 - i. Gedaliah made governor (40:7-12). But a plot against him was pursued.

Chapter 41 Summary: Jeremiah 41 records how Ishmael assassinates Gedaliah, whom the Babylonians had appointed as governor over Judah. Ishmael also slaughters a number of Jews who have come to worship God, and takes captive the people who are with Gedaliah in Mizpah. Johanan and the other army officers rescue the captives, and decide to flee to Egypt, because they are afraid of what the Babylonians will do, because Gedaliah has been killed. Ishmael and his followers escape, and set out to join the Ammonites.

- ii. The Ammonites' assassin (40:13-41:10). Ishmael murdered him, and then took hostages and killed other citizens. Ishmael's plan was to flee to Ammon.
- iii. The remnant army (41:11-18). An Israelite commander named Johanan came to the hostages' rescue.

c) Jeremiah consulted (Ch. 42-43)

Chapter 42 Summary: In Jeremiah 42, the remnant of Judah, led by Johanan, ask Jeremiah to seek guidance from God on their behalf. They are proposing to flee to Egypt, in fear of what the Babylonians will do in response to the assassination of Gedaliah. They claim they will obey whatever God says to them. God declares that they should stay in Judah where he will protect. If they flee to Egypt disaster will overtake them and they will die by the sword, famine or plague.

- i. Johanan's question (42:1-7)
- ii. God's reply (42:7-22)

Chapter 43 Summary: In Jeremiah 43, the remnant, led by Johanan, rejected what God has said through Jeremiah, and go to Egypt, taking Jeremiah with them. In Egypt, Jeremiah prophesies that the Babylonians, led by King Nebuchadnezzar, will attack and overcome Egypt, and that many people will die or be taken into captivity.

- iii. Johanan's rebellion (43:1-7). Johanan had no intention of doing what God said. Rather, they accused Jeremiah and Baruch of wanting to hand them over to the Babylonians so they could be sent into exile.
- iv. God's promised judgment (43:8-13). Babylon would conquer Egypt.

2) The word concerning the Jews in Egypt (Ch. 44)

Chapter 44 Summary: Jeremiah 44 records how the remnant, who have fled from Judah to Egypt, continue to worship false gods, and burn incense and make offerings to the Queen of Heaven. They refuse to listen to the warnings given them through Jeremiah. God declares that the disasters, which came upon Judah and Jerusalem, will also come upon them, and only a few fugitives will survive. The Pharaoh of Egypt, like King Zedekiah, will be defeated by the Babylonians.

- a) Word against the rebels (44:1-14). Jeremiah did not stop preaching even though he had been forced into exile in Egypt.
 - i. Unrepentant in Egypt (44:1-10)
 - ii. Promised destruction (44:11-14)
- b) The rebels respond (44:15-30)
 - i. They answer, "No" (44:15-19). The people were not sorry nor repented. They argued that their situation was because they did not serve false gods enough.

- ii. God's reply (44:20-30). Egypt's Pharaoh would be taken prisoner as Zedekiah was, and the Jews who trusted in his protection would die by sword, famine, and peril.

3) The word to Baruch (Ch. 45)

Chapter 45 Summary: Jeremiah 45 records a short personal prophecy, given through Jeremiah for the prophet Baruch. God encourages Baruch not to despair, even though He is about to bring disaster upon the Israelites. God declares that He will let Baruch escape with his life.

- a) His complaint (45:1-3). Baruch mourned the loss of great things for himself.
- b) God's reply (45:4-5). Baruch must not seek great things for himself, but he could be sure that the Lord would allow him to live. He would protect him as He had protected Jeremiah. Baruch must see it as a privilege to have served the Lord under difficult circumstances. Vs 5 – same with us not to seek great things.

III. Sermons on the nations (Ch. 46-51) (under Zedekiah?)

A. Word against Egypt (Ch. 46)

Chapter 46 Summary: Jeremiah 46 is a prophecy declaring that Egypt will be defeated by the Babylonians, led by King Nebuchadnezzar. God declares that, although the nations where the Israelites have scattered to will be defeated, He will save the Israelites, and not destroy them.

1. Promised destruction (46:1-12)
2. Babylon will come (46:13-26)
3. Israel's deliverance (46:27-28). Israel would return to their land, just as Jeremiah 30-33 had promised. They would be corrected for their sins, but the Lord is not finished with them.

B. Words against Israel's neighbors (Ch. 47-49)

Chapter 47 Summary: Jeremiah 47 records a prophecy against the Philistines, who occupy the coastal strip between Judah and the Mediterranean Sea. God declares that they will be invaded by a nation from the north (Babylon), and that the major cities of Gaza and Ashkelon will be defeated.

1. Against Philistia (Ch. 47)

Chapter 48 Summary: Jeremiah 48 records a prophecy about Moab, a country located to the east of Judah, but separated from Judah by the dead sea. (Part of present day Jordan.) Moab and all her fortified towns and cities will be defeated, and her false god, Chemosh, will not be able to save her. This will happen because of Moab's pride and arrogance, and because she ridiculed Israel. In later times God declares that the fortunes of Moab will be restored.

2. Against Moab (Ch. 48). Vs 10 –curse on those who do the work of the Lord deceitfully.

Chapter 49 Summary: Jeremiah 49 records prophecies concerning a number of the nations which border Judah and Israel. God declares through Jeremiah that Ammon, Edom, Elam, Hazor and Arum (Damascus) will all be invaded and overcome. These nations eventually were all absorbed into the Babylonian empire.

3. Against Ammon (49:1-6). God will judge Ammon but restore him in the future.
4. Against Edom (49:7-22). They would be punished and exiled. Jeremiah seems to borrow from Obadiah- vs 14-16 is Obadiah 1-4.
5. Against Damascus (49:23-27). They would be helpless before the Babylonian army.
6. Against Kedar (49:28-33). Location is uncertain. Will be judged.
7. Against Elam (49:34-39). Location is uncertain. No one is safe from God's judgment.

C. Words against Babylon (Ch. 50-51)

Chapter 50 Summary: Jeremiah 50 records a prophecy concerning Babylon. Although God has used Babylon as an instrument of judgement upon Israel, Babylon herself will be defeated by a nation from the north, and her gods put to shame. (This prophecy was fulfilled with the invasion and defeat of the Babylonians by the Medes and Persians in about 540BC.) God declares that He will restore the Israelites, who have been taken captive into Babylon, back to their land.

1. Destruction from the north (50:1-3). Babylon will be defeated (Medes and Persians).
2. Israel's repentance and return (50:4-8). God's people allowed to return home (Cyrus).
3. God's vengeance on Babylon (50:9-16). Babylon has arrogantly assumed that they have done everything on their own.
4. Israel's restoration (50:17-20). Israel will return to the Promised Land. Their sins will be forgotten, and the people will have a fresh start with the Lord.
5. God's destruction of Babylon (50:21-32). Babylon will be so utterly destroyed that only wild animals will live there.

6. Israel's rescue (50:33-34)
7. Babylon's destruction (50:35-46). God's plans for judgment cannot be stopped. God has determined the time for Babylon's punishment.

Chapter 51 Summary: Jeremiah 51 is a continuation of a prophecy against Babylon. God declares that Babylon will be destroyed by the Medes. All shall be broken in pieces. Jeremiah instructs Seraiah (the chief priest) to read this prophecy in Babylon, then bind a stone to the prophecy and throw it in the Euphrates to demonstrate that Babylon shall sink.

8. Song of Babylon's destruction (51:1-58). 51:10 – good to remember
9. Postscript: Word to Seraiah against Babylon (51:59-64). He instructed Seraiah to take the scroll of these prophecies, tie a rock to them, and throw them in the Euphrates River. This act symbolized the inevitable sinking of Babylon as a nation.

IV. Postscript: The fall of Jerusalem (Ch. 52) (around 560 BC in Babylon?) (Map 80, 82)

Chapter 52 Summary: Jeremiah 52 describes how the Babylonians lay siege to Jerusalem, and eventually defeat the city and take King Zedekiah into captivity. The temple is destroyed by fire and the city walls broken down. The consecrated temple furnishings and utensils, used in the worship of God, are taken away to Babylon. Over 4,600 Israelites are also taken into exile in Babylon. After thirty-seven years in exile King Jehoiachin finds favour with King Evil-Merodach, and is released from prison.

- A. Zedekiah's rebellious reign (52:1-3)
- B. Jerusalem captured (52:4-7)
- C. Zedekiah's captivity (52:8-11)
- D. Jerusalem sacked (52:12-23). When Solomon built the Temple, the Lord promised to place His name there as long as the people served Him ([1 Kings 9:1-9](#)). The nation had not kept their end of the covenant, so the Lord was justified in judging now.
- E. The Jews carried away (52:24-30). Israel had lost its king, its capital, and its Temple. Now it would lose its people. Babylon sent the most useful of the population to distant lands to join those who were taken captive in 605 and 597 B.C.
- F. Mercy to Jehoiachin (52:31-34). Jeremiah ends with a small bit of hope. Exiled for 37 years, Jehoiachin was given preferential treatment in his declining years. This demonstrates that God's eternal covenant with David continued in effect. As long as the Davidic lineage continued, the promise of the king mentioned in Jeremiah 23:1-8 remained alive. Israel may sink into decline, defeat, and exile, yet the Lord is not finished with the chosen people. As Jeremiah 30-33 makes plain, there is still a future hope for the people of God.