

Old Testament Survey
Lesson 36 – The Tragic Days of Jeremiah
(Jeremiah 18-52; Lamentations)

The Arrangement of Jeremiah’s Prophecies

The words of Jeremiah are not in chronological order, but there are enough clues in the prophecies themselves to determine the general order in which they were spoken. We list Jeremiah’s prophecies below in their probable order according to the reigns of the various kings.

Read at least Jeremiah chapters 18-39. Also read Jeremiah chapters 40-52, if you can. If you have questions, do not hesitate to ask them.

Prophecies in the Days of Josiah and Jehoahaz (627-608 BC)

There is little doubt that chapters 1-17 were spoken during the days of Josiah and Jehoahaz (see Lesson 34).

Prophecies in the Days of Jehoiakim (608-597 BC)

1. Jeremiah prophesies that Jehoahaz (Shallum) will die in Egypt (22:1-12).
“He shall return no more, nor see his native country” (v. ____)
2. Jeremiah prophesies that evil will come on Jehoiakim (22:13-23).
“He shall be buried with the burial of a donkey” (v. ____)
3. Jeremiah prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (26:1-7).
“I will make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse” (v. ____)
4. The priests and prophets condemn Jeremiah to death (26:8-11).
5. Jeremiah defends himself (26:12-15).
“Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God” (v. ____)
6. The princes protect Jeremiah (26:16-19).
“He has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God” (v. ____)
7. Jehoiakim kills the true prophet Urijah (26:20-24).
8. God teaches Jeremiah a lesson at a potter’s house (18:1-17).
9. The Jews begin to plot against Jeremiah, and he prays for help (18:18-23).
10. Jeremiah announces God’s curse on idolatrous Judah (19:1-15).
“I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters” (v. ____)
11. The priest Pashhur puts Jeremiah in the stocks for one night (20:1-3).
12. Jeremiah prophesies that Pashhur will die as a captive in Babylon (20:4-6).
“You shall go to Babylon, and there you shall die, and be buried there” (v. ____)
Very likely Pashhur was taken captive in either 605 or 597 BC.

13. Jeremiah leaps from acute depression to joy to depression again (20:7-18).
Jeremiah cursed the day on which he was born, just as Job had done.
14. Nebuchadnezzar II attacks for the first time (605 BC) and takes captives, including Daniel.
15. Jeremiah prophesies that the Babylonian Captivity will last for 70 years (25:1-14).
“When seventy years are completed, ...I will punish the king of Babylon” (v. ____
Cyrus of Persia permitted the exiled Jews to return home 70 years later.
16. Jeremiah prophesies God’s judgment on all the nations, including Babylon (25:15-38).
These prophecies against the nations are found in greater detail in chapters 46-51 of Jeremiah.
17. Jeremiah contrasts the obedience of the Rechabites to their human father with the disobedience of God’s people to their God (35:1-19).
The Rechabites refused to drink wine because it was the rule of their ancestor.
18. Secretary Baruch writes all of Jeremiah’s prophecies on a scroll and reads it publicly (36:1-8).
19. Baruch reads the scroll in the Temple and to the princes (36:9-19).
20. Jehoiakim tosses Jeremiah’s scroll into the fire (36:20-26).
“The king cut it with the scribe’s knife and cast it into the fire” (v. ____
21. Baruch rewrites the scroll and adds to it (36:27-32).
22. Jeremiah comforts Baruch with the promise of life (45:1-5).
At about this time (605 BC) Babylonia broke the power of both Egypt and Assyria in the battle of Carchemish.

Prophecies in the Days of Jehoiachin (also called Coniah) (597 BC)

23. Jeremiah prophesies against Jehoiachin (22:24-30).
“I will cast you out, and your mother who bore you, into another country” (v. ____
24. Jeremiah prophesies the coming of David’s Righteous Branch (23:1-8).
“I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness... in His days Judah will be saved” (vv. ____
“Now this is His name... : THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (v. ____
This is a prophecy of **JESUS**, the Son of David, our Savior.
25. Jeremiah condemns the false prophets (23:9-40).
“They speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the LORD” (v. ____
“He who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully” (v. ____
“I am against the prophets who use their tongues and say, ‘He says.’” (v. ____

26. Nebuchadnezzar II attacks for the second time and takes captives, including Jehoiachin and Ezekiel.

Note: The Righteous Branch of David was hidden in Jehoiachin. In the year 560 BC Evil-Merodach of Babylon showed kindness to Jehoiachin. This was evidence that God had not forgotten His promises to David and his family. See Jeremiah 52:31-34. Jehoiachin is called Jeconiah in Matthew 1:11-12.

Prophecies in the Days of Zedekiah (597-586 BC)

27. Jeremiah sees in a vision two baskets of figs – one good, one bad (24:1-10).
Those remaining in Jerusalem were the bad figs, those exiled to Babylon were the good figs.
28. By letter Jeremiah reminds the exiles that they will not return for 70 years (29:1-14).

29. Jeremiah rebukes the false prophets of the Jews in Babylon (29:15-32).
30. Jeremiah wears a yoke around his neck, and urges the nations and Judah to surrender completely to Babylon (27:1-22).
31. The false prophet Hananiah says Babylon's power will be broken in two years (28:1-11).
"Hananiah the prophet took the yoke off the prophet Jeremiah's neck and broke it" (v. ____)
32. Jeremiah prophesies the death of Hananiah in one year, and he dies as Jeremiah said (28:12-17).
33. Zedekiah rebels against Nebuchadnezzar II, and Nebuchadnezzar attacks for the third time.
34. Zedekiah asks Jeremiah for help against Nebuchadnezzar II and Babylon (21:1-2).
35. Jeremiah answers that God is against Jerusalem and Judah (21:3-14)
"I have set My face against this city for adversity and not for good" (v. ____)
36. Jeremiah prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem to Zedekiah (34:1-7).
37. Zedekiah frees the slaves, and then re-enslaves them again (34:8-11).
 The Babylonians left Jerusalem for a time because they thought the Egyptians were coming.
38. Jeremiah rebukes Zedekiah, and again prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem (34:12-22).
39. Jeremiah prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem to Zedekiah's messengers (37:1-10).
40. Jeremiah is arrested as a traitor and imprisoned (37:11-15).
 This was the charge: **"You are defecting to the Chaldeans"** (v. ____)
41. Zedekiah transfers Jeremiah to the Court of the Guard (37:16-21).
42. Jeremiah prophesies the return of the Jews from Babylon (30:1-24).
"I will not make a complete end of you" (v. ____)
43. Jeremiah prophesies a **NEW COVENANT** between God and His people (31:1-40).
"The days are coming when I will make a new covenant" (v. ____)
"I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (v. ____)
"I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more" (v. ____)
44. While still in prison Jeremiah buys his cousin's field in an act of faith (32:1-15).
45. Jeremiah prays to God and receives a comforting answer (32:16-44).
"I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely" (v. ____)
46. God renews His everlasting covenant with the house of David (33:1-26).
"I will cause to grow up to David a Branch of righteousness" (v. ____)
47. The princes lower Jeremiah into a muddy cistern (38:1-6).
48. An Ethiopian eunuch, Ebed-Melech, rescues Jeremiah with ropes and old rags (38:7-13).
49. Jeremiah secretly urges Zedekiah to surrender (38:14-28).
50. Nebuchadnezzar II conquers Jerusalem and takes Zedekiah captive (39:1-10; 52:1-30).
 He **"killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes"** and then **"put out Zedekiah's eyes"** (vv. ____)

Prophecies in the Days of Gedaliah and Beyond (586 - ? BC)

51. Nebuchadnezzar II gives Jeremiah into the care of Gedaliah (39:11-14).
52. Jeremiah promises protection to Ebed-Melech, who had helped him (39:15-18).

53. Jeremiah returns to Jerusalem and its ruler Gedaliah (40:1-6).
54. Gedaliah rules over the remnant Jews near Jerusalem (40:7-12).
55. Gedaliah is murdered by Ishmael, who is then killed in an insurrection (40:13 – 41:16).
56. The remaining Jews ask Jeremiah if they should go to Egypt (41:17 – 42:6).

“We will obey the voice of the LORD our God to whom we send you” (42: __)

57. Jeremiah says they should not go to Egypt (42:7-22).

“So will My fury be poured out on you when you enter Egypt” (v. __)

58. The remaining Jews disobey God and go to Egypt anyway (43:1-7).

“They did not obey the voice of the LORD” (v. __)

59. Jeremiah prophesies that Nebuchadnezzar II will capture Egypt too (43:8-13).

This prophecy was fulfilled in 568 BC.

60. The Jews in Egypt publicly renounce their God and worship the Queen of Heaven (44:1-19).

61. Jeremiah prophesies evil to the Jews in Egypt except for a small remnant (44:20-30).

The Book of Lamentations

In this book Jeremiah laments the destruction of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the city God Himself had chosen for His Temple and as the place where He would speak to His people, and where they would worship Him. Of all the cities in the world, God chose Jerusalem to be the place from which the Word of God would go out into all the world. Jerusalem is the place where Jesus was later crucified, where He rose from the dead, and where the Holy Spirit came down on Jesus' followers.

Just as Jerusalem was chosen by God and yet was destroyed because of its wickedness, so also Jesus, our Lord, was chosen by God to be our Savior and yet was “destroyed” because of wickedness –not f His own wickedness but our wickedness. Our wickedness was laid on Him. He was chosen by God to be our Substitute to suffer God's wrath in our place and thus atone for our sins. Because of the similarity between Jerusalem (God's city), and Jesus (God's Son), some of the laments concerning Jerusalem also can be used as laments concerning the suffering of Jesus.

Read Lamentations. If you have questions, do not hesitate to ask them.

Notice the similarities between Jerusalem and the sufferings of Jesus in these verses:

“For the LORD has afflicted her because of the multitude of her transgressions” (1: __)

“Behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which has been brought on me” (1: __)

“All who pass by clap their hands at you; they hiss and shake their heads” (2: __)

But still in what God did to Jerusalem and to His Son there is bright hope for the future.

“Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not” (3: __)

“It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD” (3: __)

Questions

1. Who defended Jeremiah when the priests and prophets wanted to kill him?
2. Why did the priests and prophets want to kill Jeremiah?
3. How many times did Nebuchadnezzar attack Jerusalem and take captives?
4. How long would the Jews have to live as captives in Babylon?
5. What did King Jehoiakim do with Jeremiah's book of prophecies?
6. What wonderful promise did Jeremiah make concerning the family of David?
7. In Jeremiah's vision, who were the good figs and who were the bad figs?
8. Why did the Jewish leaders consider Jeremiah a traitor?
9. What is meant by the new covenant God would make with His people?
10. What happened to King Zedekiah after Jerusalem was taken captive?
11. What good thing did Ebed-Melech do for the prophet Jeremiah?
12. In what way was Jerusalem's distress a preview of Jesus' suffering?