

Jeremiah's Enlightenment

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I. Jeremiah's Calling

1:2-3 'thirteenth year' of Josiah is 627BC; 'eleventh year of Zedekiah' is 586BC - approximately 40 years Jeremiah functioned as a prophet in Jerusalem

1:5 unique preparation of Jeremiah

1:6 Jeremiah likely only 17 or 18 - born about 645BC

1:7-8 God is NOT concerned with human limitations

1:9-10 Jeremiah's commission: to preside over the downfall and establishment of 'nations'

1:11-12 **Vision1:** the almond branch - (most important) a play on words 'shaqed' (almond branch), 'shoqed' (watching) - YHWH is watching over his word (plan, purpose) to perform it (Is55:11, 45:23, 24:3, Dt8:3, 32:47, Mt4:4)

1:13-19 **Vision 2:** a boiling pot - the foe from the north, the impending destruction, occupied Jeremiah's day to day existence - warning the people of Jerusalem (NOT one is recorded to have repented)

II. The Immanent Destruction (the Foe from the North)

1:10 the theme is referenced many times throughout the book – destruction is in almost every prophecy

1:13-15 the boiling pot: the foe from the north remains ambiguous for nearly 20 years – in 627BC Assyria remained the dominant power; Babylon was scarcely visible

4:6-7 Allusion to Nabopolassar's victory over Assyria in 626BC, but Jeremiah may not have recognized it

4:19-21 Jeremiah sees a vision of the coming war

6:1 the territory of Benjamin – immediately north of Jerusalem would naturally suffer during the siege of Jerusalem

6:4-6 the siege is inevitable

10:22 likely an allusion to the battles of Haran in 609BC or Carchemish in 605BC

13:20-21 Allusion to Hezekiah and (especially) Josiah supporting Babylon

20:1-6 likely between 609 and 605: the first explicit mention of Babylon

21:1-10 588BC just before the end – no doubt who the foe from the north is: Nebuchadnezzar

III. The Contemporary Restoration

From God's perspective, his plan is one continuous process, a continuum; it is non-linear, non-sequential, and atemporal. Jeremiah is confused as to how things can play out.

3:6-10 Allegory of the 'treacherous sisters', also taken up by Ezekiel (Ez16; Ez23); v10 failure of the reform

3:11-14a Jeremiah directs his preaching to North Israel (at that time under Josiah's control)

3:14b-18 we recognize this as second exodus – but Jeremiah could not, as could not earlier prophets

4:8-10 Demonstrates Jeremiah's inability to distinguish the contemporary return from the glorious return

4:27, 5:10, 18 'not a full end' clearly show that a remnant would survive the immanent destruction

18:1-11 The Potter and the Clay: this is likely late in Josiah's reign (612?) when it is clear to Jeremiah the reform has failed – the purpose of the object lesson is to show in no uncertain terms that YHWH has a plan that involves reshaping Israel

24:1-10 The Vision of Good Figs and the Bad Figs: (597) some of the exiles would repent, and would form the community into which the Messiah would come, and would form the initial nucleus of the New Testament Church – part of God's continuous plan

25:8-14 (605) Nebuchadnezzar clearly identified as the 'foe from the north' – Babylon will be punished after 70 years (609-539), which will make the contemporary return possible

27:19-22 explicit prophecy of contemporary return

29: Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles: (593) 1-7 live your life in captivity; 10-13 contemporary return is certain; 14 second exodus

IV. The Glorious Restoration – Chapters 30:, 31:, 32:, and 33:

These chapters are the epitome of Jeremiah's understanding as revealed by God: we can learn a lot about God's nature and God's plan from this revelation which Jeremiah has faithfully recorded. Chapters 30: and 31: are NOT dated – they are likely collected from various occasions based on content – very topical, not chronological. (23:3-8)

30:1-3 the impetus for collecting this material (possibly for the whole book) – purpose is clear: for our understanding

30:4-7 Jeremiah goes straight to the Day of YHWH – the climax ending the old age and starting the new age (see also 4:23-26, 25:30-38). The final destruction of Israel was a type of the ultimate Day of YHWH. (See also Zephaniah)

30:8-9 'yoke' is an allusion to 27:2, 8; pronouns unclear: eclectic nature of material, out of context

30:10-11 also included at 46:27-28; omitted here by LXX; 'servant' echoes Isaiah's Servant Songs

30:12-15 summary of the condition of Israel in Jeremiah's time, just before the final destruction of Jerusalem
30:16 punishment of nearby nations, typified especially by Edom (see 47:, 48:, and 49:)
30:17-20 amalgam of both contemporary restoration and glorious restoration (v18 'tents' see Nm24:5)
30:21 'dual' – typical Hasmonean kings; anti-type resurrected David under King of Kings
30:22 God's eternal objective for his people (Ex19:5-6a)

Skip to chapter 32: Jeremiah explains how he came to understand God's plan

32:1-2 588/87 Jerusalem under the final siege; Jeremiah is confined
32:3-5 Zedekiah's charge against Jeremiah
32:6-14 YHWH reveals to Jeremiah that his cousin is about to try to sell him a field; it comes to pass
32:15 God's purpose in the object lesson
32:16-25 Jeremiah prays to God: 'why did you have me buy the field?'
32:26-35 YHWH responds, identifying himself as the omnipotent God, and certifying the immanent destruction
32:36-44 YHWH continues, as sure as the destruction is the restoration – both contemporary and glorious – all is one to God; the object lesson of the field was to help Jeremiah understand the continuum
33:1-3 same setting – a little later after Jeremiah has had time to contemplate some more: God's purpose for Jeremiah, and for us, is to reveal '**great and hidden things**' – his plan and his nature (Dt29:29)
33:4-13 as sure as the immanent destruction is the restoration: both contemporary and glorious as two parts of the same whole
33:14-18 the righteous branch, as dealt with in many other prophecies, is the Messiah
33:19-26 YHWH again appeals to his status as omnipotent creator for surety of his plan

Return to chapter 31: with Jeremiah's new understanding

30:23-24ba Jeremiah again comes back to the day of YHWH as the focal point of the transition
30:24bβ-31:1 are parenthetical: we can understand this because Jeremiah recorded it, and we have history and the book of Revelation
31:2-3 allusion to first exodus, but really applies to second exodus Hs2:14, 13:4
31:4-6 world tomorrow: 'virgin Israel' converted constituents of New Israel
31:7 always God's intension for Israel: will be realized with New Israel in the world tomorrow
31:8-14 classic expression of second exodus and New Israel – salvation to all the world
31:15-22 Rachel's weeping: several different metaphors and idiomatic expressions: difficult for us – included here for content; Rachel mother of

Joseph (North Israel: died 722) and Benjamin (South Israel: died 586);
Ramah – five miles north of Jerusalem

31:16a,b 'your' – Rachel as mother of Israel; or, Jeremiah (16:5) – reward to understand 'great and hidden things'
31:16c-17 'they' children of vs15 – return from exile, contemporary and second exodus
31:18-20 'Ephraim' through metonymy represents all Israel; the 'calf' (metaphor); Hs4:16, 10:11 uses same symbol – God brings Israel to repentance; dear son – Hs11:3, darling child – Jr2:2
31:21 road markers, guideposts – we use similar idioms today: 'know where you came from'
31:22a waver – people called but not committed Lk9:62
31:22b metaphor: 'woman encircles a man' - prophecy of start of New Testament Church (Rv12:1-6); also, the Church in the World Tomorrow
31:23-25 restoration (mostly contemporary)
31:26 parenthetical: to which part of this does it apply?
31:27-30 the restoration will include human and agricultural abundance; and, there will be justice (Ez3:16-21, 18:, 33:1-20)

31:31-37 '**the top of the mountain**' – the new covenant, the objective of God's plan

31:31-33 New Covenant with New Israel in the World Tomorrow (Ez36:24-32)

31:34 '**great and hidden things**' will be revealed to everyone

31:35-37 God appeals to his status as Creator for surety of his word – his plan (33:20-22)

31:38-40 reconstruction of Jerusalem (mostly contemporary)