

## **Class Schedule for Jeremiah & Lamentations**

### **Wednesdays: 7pm**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Week</u>	<u>Chapters</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Oct 2	1	Introduction & Chap 1	Introduction & Call of Jeremiah
Oct 9	2	3:6-25	A Call to Repent
Oct 16	3	7:30-8:3	The Valley of Slaughter ~ Image of Gehenna
Oct 23	4	11:1-23	The Broken Covenant
Oct 30	5	18:1-23	The Potter & Clay
Nov 6	6	21:1-22:5	The Way of Life or Death
Nov 13	7	25:1-29	Serve 70 Years during the Lord's Wrath
Nov 20	8	29:1-32	Continue to Live and Prosper in Babylon
Nov 27	9	31:31-40	The New Covenant
Dec 4	10	39:1-18	The Fall of Jerusalem
Dec 11	11	51:1-63	The End of Babylon
Dec 18	12	52:1-34	Overview of the Fall of Jerusalem
Dec 25	13	Lamentations	Funeral of Jerusalem

## INTRO TO JEREMIAH

The book of Jeremiah is the prophecy of a man divinely called in his youth from the priest-city of Anathoth. A heartbroken prophet with a heartbreaking message, Jeremiah labors for more than forty years proclaiming a message of doom to the stiff-necked people of Judah. Despised and persecuted by his countrymen, Jeremiah bathes his harsh prophecies in tears of compassion. His broken heart causes him to write a broken book, which is difficult to arrange chronologically or topically. But through his sermons and signs he faithfully declares that surrender to God's will is the only way to avoid calamity.

### Author

The book clearly states that Jeremiah is its author (1:1). He dictated all his prophecies to his secretary Baruch from the beginning of his ministry until the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and later sections were also composed. Only chapter 52, a supplement which is almost identical to 2 Kings 24:18–25:30, was evidently not written by Jeremiah.

Jeremiah was the son of Hilkiah the priest and lived about two miles north of Jerusalem in the town of Anathoth. As an object lesson to Judah, he was not allowed to marry (16:2). Because of his unwelcome message of divine judgment to be brought about through Babylonian invasion, he was threatened and imprisoned. The prophet survived the Babylonian assault on the city and was later taken to Egypt where he died.

### Date

According to 36:1–3, the writing of portions of Jeremiah may be dated with some precision to the fourth year of Jehoiakim (605 B.C.), when Jeremiah was commanded by God to write down the prophetic messages he had delivered to the people over the previous twenty years. This material apparently corresponds to chapters 1–20. The remaining chapters contain prophecies and historical accounts in topical rather than chronological order, covering the second twenty to twenty-five years of Jeremiah's ministry.

Jeremiah was a contemporary of Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Daniel, and Ezekiel, and his ministry stretched from c. 627 to c. 580 B.C. There were three stages in Jeremiah's ministry. From 627 to 605 B.C. he prophesied while Judah was threatened by Assyria and Egypt. From 605 to 586 B.C. he proclaimed God's judgment while Judah was threatened and besieged by Babylon. From 586 to about 580 B.C. he ministered in Jerusalem and Egypt after Judah's downfall.

### Themes and Literary Structure

Although Jeremiah is not easily arranged chronologically or thematically, its basic message is clear: the inevitable and inescapable judgment of God upon Israel for her rebellion and disobedience. The book may be divided into four main sections: the call of the prophet Jeremiah (ch. 1), prophecies to Judah (2:1–45:5), prophecies to the Gentiles (46:1–51:64), and the fall of Jerusalem (ch. 52).

Often known as the "weeping prophet," Jeremiah faithfully proclaimed the divine condemnation of rebellious Judah for forty years. His sympathy and concern for his nation caused him to grieve deeply over the rebelliousness and imminent doom of his people.

Often Jeremiah desired to resign the prophetic office because of the harshness of his message and the unfriendly response that it elicited. It was Jeremiah's difficult task to confront a people who seemed to become more insanely confident as the peril grew. They believed that God would not let Jerusalem fall because they possessed the temple and the one true religion.

Jeremiah was required to tell them that the terms of God's covenant mandated punishment for disobedience.

The well-known section on the new covenant (chs. 30–33) reflects Jeremiah's special interest in the covenant. All the prophets based their accusations and appeals on Israel's covenant relationship with God, but Jeremiah does so much more explicitly. He does not fault the content of the old covenant, but recognizes that it must be internalized if it is to be lived out. Thus he prophesies the coming of a new covenant—one that will be written on the hearts of God's people (31:31–34).

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## **OUTLINE OF JEREMIAH**

### **Part One: The Call of Jeremiah (1:1–19)**

- I. Jeremiah's Call 1:1–10**
- II. Jeremiah's Signs 1:11–16**
- III. Jeremiah's Assurance 1:17–19**

### **Part Two: The Prophecies to Judah (2:1–45:5)**

- I. The Condemnation of Judah 2:1–25:38**
  - A. Jeremiah's First Sermon: Judah Sinned Willfully 2:1–3:5
  - B. Jeremiah's Second Sermon: Judah to Be Judged 3:6–6:30
  - C. Jeremiah's Third Sermon: Judah's Hypocrisy in Worship 7:1–10:25
  - D. Jeremiah's Fourth Sermon: Judah's Breach of the Covenant 11:1–12:17
  - E. Jeremiah's Fifth Sermon: Judah's Revived Relationship 13:1–27
  - F. Jeremiah's Sixth Sermon: The Drought in Judah 14:1–15:21
  - G. Jeremiah's Seventh Sermon: Jeremiah's Unmarried State 16:1–17:27
  - H. Jeremiah's Eighth Sermon: Sign of the Potter's House 18:1–20:18
  - I. Jeremiah's Ninth Sermon: Against Judah's Kings 21:1–23:8
  - J. Jeremiah's Tenth Sermon: Against Judah's False Prophets 23:9–40
  - K. Jeremiah's Eleventh Sermon: The Two Baskets of Figs 24:1–10
  - L. Jeremiah's Twelfth Sermon: The Seventy-Year Captivity 25:1–38
- II. The Conflicts of Jeremiah 26:1–29:32**
  - A. Conflict with the Nation 26:1–24
  - B. Conflict with the False Prophets 27:1–22
  - C. Conflict with Hananiah 28:1–17
  - D. Conflict with Shemaiah 29:1–32
- III. The Future Restoration of Jerusalem 30:1–33:26**
  - A. Restoration to the Land 30:1–24
  - B. Restoration of the Nation 31:1–40
  - C. Rebuilding of Jerusalem 32:1–44
  - D. Reconfirming the Covenant 33:1–26
- IV. The Present Fall of Jerusalem 34:1–45:5**
  - A. Messages Before the Fall 34:1–36:32
  - B. Events Before the Fall 37:1–38:28

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<sup>1</sup>*Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts : Old and New Testaments.*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996).

- C. Events During the Fall 39:1–18
- D. Messages After the Fall 40:1–44:30
- E. Message to Baruch 45:1–5

**Part Three: The Prophecies to the Gentiles (46:1–51:64)**

- I. **Prophecies Against Egypt 46:1–28**
- II. **Prophecies Against Philistia 47:1–7**
- III. **Prophecies Against Moab 48:1–47**
- IV. **Prophecies Against Ammon 49:1–6**
- V. **Prophecies Against Edom 49:7–22**
- VI. **Prophecies Against Damascus 49:23–27**
- VII. **Prophecies Against Kedar and Hazor 49:28–33**
- VIII. **Prophecies Against Elam 49:34–39**
- IX. **Prophecies Against Babylon 50:1–51:64**
  - A. Babylon's Defeat 50:1–20
  - B. Babylon's Desolation 50:21–46
  - C. Babylon's Destiny 51:1–64

**Part Four: The Fall of Jerusalem (52:1–34)**

- I. **The Capture of Jerusalem 52:1–11**
- II. **The Destruction of Jerusalem 52:12–23**
- III. **The Exile to Babylon 52:24–30**
- IV. **The Liberation of Jehoiachin 52:31–34**

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## **Babylonians Invade Palestine**

Babylon overthrew Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, in 612 B.C., and moved quickly to establish control over much of the ancient Near East. Defeating the Egyptians at the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon moved against Palestine and deported important people such as Daniel to Babylon. Judah's king Jehoiakim thus became a Babylonian vassal, but he rejected Jeremiah's warnings in 601 B.C. and rebelled. Jehoiachin became Judah's next king in 597 B.C., but was replaced by Zedekiah three months later when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem and deported Jehoiachin to Babylon. Zedekiah was the last king of Judah; his attempted alliance with Egypt led to Nebuchadnezzar's occupation and overthrow of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

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<sup>2</sup>*Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts : Old and New Testaments.*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996).

<sup>3</sup>*Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts : Old and New Testaments.*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996).

## ***Jeremiah ~ Chapter 1***

### **Thought Question:**

1. How do you feel when you have to bring someone news that you know they won't like?

### **Chapter Questions:**

2. When was Jeremiah chosen to be a prophet?
3. What did Jeremiah think about being a prophet?
4. What vision did Jeremiah first see and what did it mean?
5. What was Jeremiah's second vision and what did it mean?
6. What did God tell Jeremiah about the response he would receive from Judah?

## ***Jeremiah ~ Chapter 3:6-25***

### **Chapter Questions:**

1. Despite witnessing God's "divorcing" Israel, what did Judah go ahead and do? (3:6-10)
2. What did God want Israel to do? What would God do? (3:11-14)
3. What kind of leaders did God intend to give to His faithful remnant? (3:15)
4. Why would the returnees no more say "the Ark of the covenant of the Lord"? (3:16)

## ***Jeremiah ~ Chapters 7:30-8:3***

### **Chapter Questions:**

1. What was going on in the Temple that angered God? (7:30)
2. What was happening at Topheth that was detestable to God? (7:31)
3. What is the Valley of the Son of Hinnom known as in the NT? (7:31)
4. What would happen in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom? (7:32-34)

### ***Jeremiah ~ Chapter 11:1-23***

#### **Chapter Questions:**

1. What did the covenant tell Israel God would do if they did not obey? (11:6-8)
2. Why was God punishing His people? (11:9-11)
3. What would Judah discover when they sought help from their idols? (11:12-13)
4. Why was Jeremiah told not to pray for Judah? (11:14-17)
5. How did Jeremiah find out about a plot on his life? (11:18-20)
6. What punishment would Anathoth suffer for their plot against Jeremiah? (11:21-23)

### ***Jeremiah ~ Chapter 18:1-23***

#### **Chapter Questions:**

1. What was the potter doing as Jeremiah watched? (18:1-4)
2. How did God liken His power over the nations to the decisions of the potter? (18:5-10)
3. What was the lesson of the potter and the clay to Israel? (18:1-11)
4. What unthinkable thing had Judah done against God? (18:12-17)
5. How did Israel attack Jeremiah and what did he want God to do about it? (18:18-23)

### ***Jeremiah ~ Chapters 21:1-22:5***

#### **Chapter Questions:**

1. Why did King Zedekiah send messengers to Jeremiah? (21:1-2)
2. What was God's answer to Zedekiah? (21:3-7)
3. What message did God have for the people of Jerusalem? (21:8-10)
4. What did God ask of the house of David? Why? (21:11-12)
5. Why was God punishing the people of Judah and Jerusalem? (21:13-14)
6. What principles of ruling did God list as conditions for His blessings? (22:1-5)

### ***Jeremiah ~ Chapter 25:1-29***

#### **Chapter Questions:**

1. How long had Jeremiah been speaking the word of God to the people of Judah? (25:2-3)
2. What was the message of the prophets? (25:5-6)
3. How did the people bring God's judgment on themselves? (25:7)
4. How long would Judah remain in captivity? (25:8-11)
5. Why would Babylon eventually be made desolate? (25:12-14)
6. What nations were in line to be judged by God? (25:17-26)
7. What was God's answer to any nation that refused the cup from Jeremiah? (25:27-29)

### ***Jeremiah ~ Chapter 29:1-32***

#### **Chapter Questions:**

1. What did God tell the exiles to do while in Babylon? (29:4-9)
2. What promise did God send to the captives in Babylon? (29:10-14)
3. What did Jeremiah inform the exiles about those who remained behind? (29:15-19)
4. What would happen to the two false prophets lying to the exiles in Babylon? (29:20-23)
5. What would happen to the false prophet claiming God made him priest? (29:24-32)

### ***Jeremiah ~ Chapter 31:31-40***

#### **Chapter Questions:**

1. What is different about the new covenant versus the Mosaic covenant? (31:31-34)
2. What chance is there that Israel would no longer be a nation before God? (31:35-37)
3. What does God promise about the rebuilt city of God? (31:38-40)

### ***Jeremiah ~ Chapter 39:1-18***

#### **Chapter Questions:**

1. How long was Jerusalem besieged before it fell to Babylon? (39:1-2)
2. What did Nebuchadnezzar do to Zedekiah when he was caught? (39:4-10)
3. Why was Nebuchadnezzar so kind to Jeremiah when he was captured? (39:11-14)
4. What message did God give to Ebed-Melech? Why? (39:11-18)

### ***Jeremiah ~ Chapter 51:1-63***

#### **Chapter Questions:**

1. What did the Babylonians fail to understand about the LORD's relationship with Israel? (51:5)
2. Who did God use to bring His vengeance upon Babylon? (51:11)
3. Why would God bring vengeance upon Babylon for His Temple and Zion? (51:11,24)
4. How did Jeremiah contrast the God of Israel with the idols of the nations? (51:17-19)
5. When was this message about Babylon delivered to the exiles in Babylon? (51:59-64)

### ***Jeremiah ~ Chapters 52***

#### **Chapter Questions:**

1. Where else in the bible one could read this account almost word for word. (52)
2. Who was left behind by Nebuzaradan after Jerusalem was taken captive? (52:12-23)
3. How tall and how big around were the bronze pillars they took? (52:12-23)
4. How many people of Judah were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar? (52:24-30)
5. Why is Jehoiachin's release and prominence in Babylon recorded? (52:31-34)



# LAMENTATIONS

Lamentations describes the funeral of a city. It is a tearstained portrait of the once-proud Jerusalem, now reduced to rubble by the invading Babylonian hordes. In a five-poem dirge, the author expresses the deep emotion of one who has seen the slaughter of many of his people, the enslavement of others, and the abject despair of the few survivors.

## Author

Traditionally, this book has been attributed to the prophet Jeremiah, though he is not named in the text. The Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) names Jeremiah as the author, and early church fathers such as Origen and Jerome agreed. Its present location after the book of Jeremiah in the English text reflects this judgment. Stylistic similarities between the two books also indicate that Jeremiah was quite possibly the author.

## Date

The vivid and passionate tone of the author gives a strong impression of one who had just experienced the horrors of the destruction of the Holy City and the temple. This fact suggests a date of composition shortly after 586 B.C.

## Themes and Literary Structure

The five chapters of Lamentations consist of five mournful poems which can be entitled: (1) the destruction of Jerusalem, (2) the anger of Yahweh, (3) the prayer for mercy, (4) the siege of Jerusalem, (5) the prayer for restoration.

The five poems each comprise a chapter, and the first four have an acrostic structure—a literary form that follows the pattern of the alphabet: the first verse or group of verses begins with the first letter of the alphabet, the second with the second, and so forth. Of course, this structure is almost impossible to reproduce in translation.

The first four chapters (poems) are dirges, loaded with pain and agony, except for two brief outbursts of faith and hope in 3:19–42 and 3:55–60. Chapter 5 is not quite as intense, but even there the throb of deep hurt is present. Throughout the poems, one is aware of theological insights typical of Jeremiah. Sharp contrasts and vivid comparisons are often repeated, and figurative language is abundant.

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## OUTLINE OF LAMENTATIONS

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- I. The Destruction of Jerusalem 1:1–22**
    - A. The Lament of the Prophet Jeremiah 1:1–11
    - B. The Lament of the City Jerusalem 1:12–22
  - II. The Anger of God 2:1–22**
    - A. The Anger of God 2:1–9
    - B. The Agony of Jerusalem 2:10–17
    - C. The Appeal of Jerusalem 2:18–22
  - III. The Prayer for Mercy 3:1–66**
    - A. Jeremiah’s Cry of Despair 3:1–18
    - B. Jeremiah’s Confession of Faith 3:19–39
    - C. Jeremiah’s Condition of Need 3:40–54
    - D. Jeremiah’s Confidence in God 3:55–66
  - IV. The Siege of Jerusalem 4:1–22**
    - A. The Conditions During the Siege 4:1–10
    - B. The Cause of the Siege 4:11–20
    - C. The Consequences of the Siege 4:21, 22
  - V. The Prayer for Restoration 5:1–22**
    - A. The Review of the Need for Restoration 5:1–15
    - B. The Repentance of Sin 5:16–18
    - C. The Request for Restoration 5:19–22
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### The Theme of Renewal

Throughout the book, the author of Lamentations couples a recognition of human sin and its consequences with profound hope in God and prayers that God will lead His people back to Him along the path of sorrow, repentance, hope, and faith.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas Nelson Publishers. *Nelson’s Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts: Old and New Testaments*. Rev. and updated ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1996. Print.

## ***Lamentations ~ Chapters 1-5***

1. Who is Jerusalem portrayed as in chapter one?
2. Why was Jerusalem called “the joy of the whole earth”, see Ps 48:2 & 50:2? (2:15)
3. How did the destruction of Jerusalem fulfill God’s word from old? (2:17)
4. What does it mean to bear the yoke in one’s youth? Why is it good? (3:27-33)
5. What was the LORD’s answer when Jeremiah called upon Him? (3:55-57)
6. What had the once compassionate women been brought to? (4:10)
7. What did God hold against the prophets and priests of Judah? (4:13-16)
8. How were they bearing the sins of their fathers who were dead? (5:7)
9. Had God utterly rejected His people? (5:21-22)