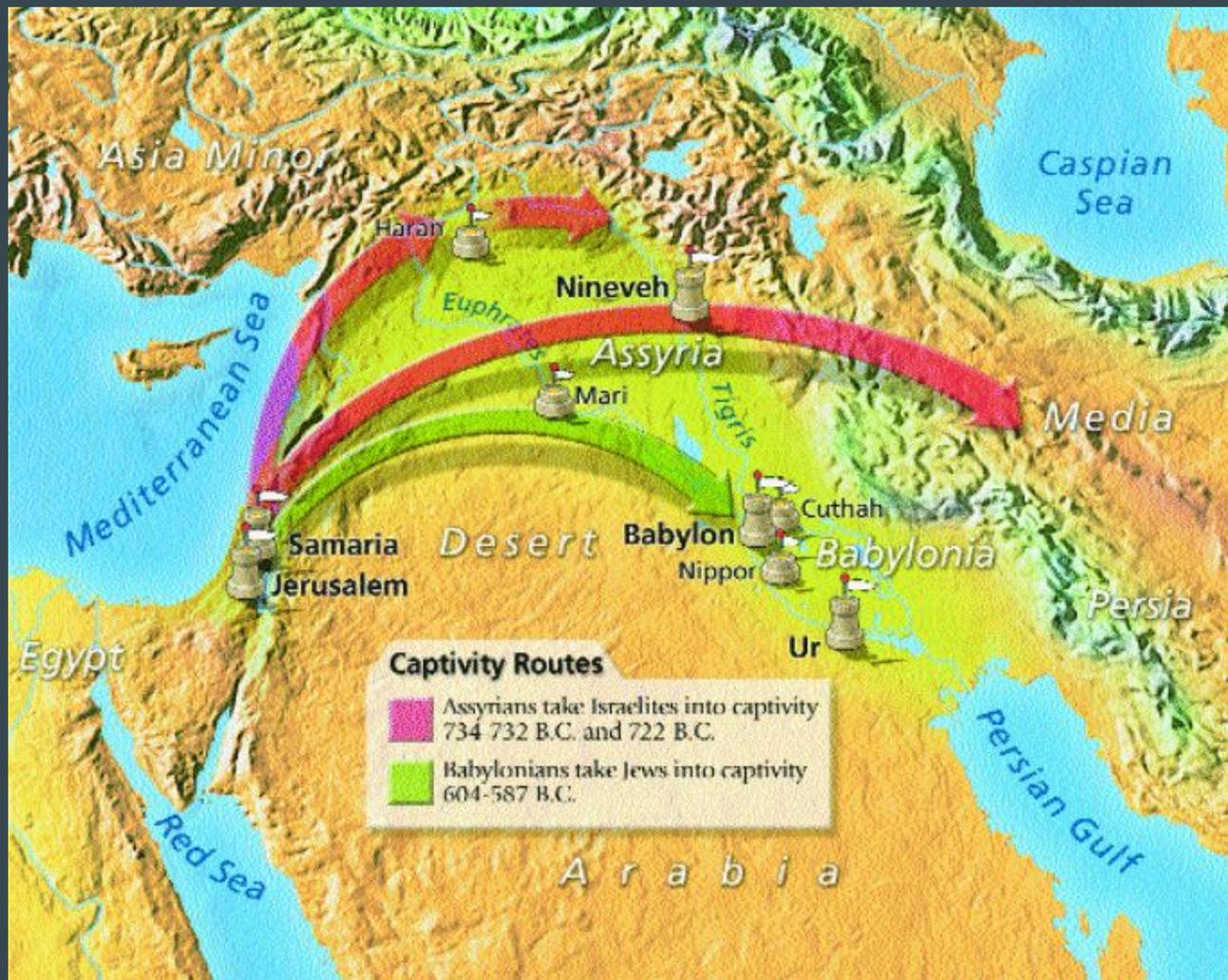


Exploring the Old Testament

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Jeremiah & Lamentations



Background of the Book

1. Northern Israel fell to the Assyrians in 722 B.C..
2. The book covers a forty-year period in which the Southern kingdom of Judah sees its last days and is exiled for breaking the covenant with the Lord.

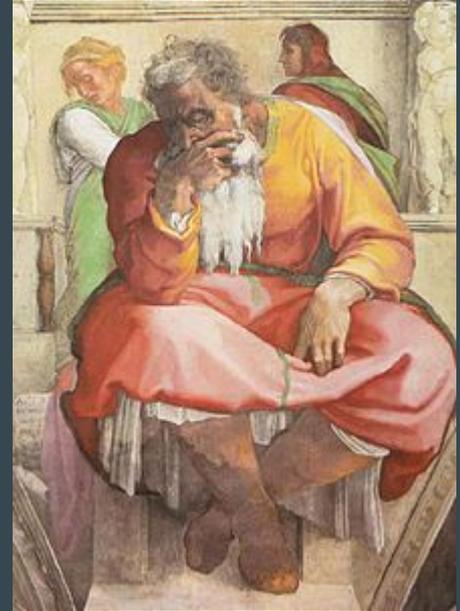
Background of the Book

Jeremiah's ministry begins in 627 B.C. and continues after Jerusalem's destruction in 587 B.C.. It spans the reigns of five kings: Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.



Background of the Man

1. Jeremiah was born and raised in Anathoth and came from a priestly line.
2. He was called to be a prophet in 627 B.C. and preached for over forty years.
3. His messages were not well-received and he faced verbal and physical persecution.



Background of the Man



1. He never married per God's command and his ministry only records two converts.
2. Jeremiah courageously preached a message of coming judgment because of sin. He was faithful even in the midst of difficulty. He is known as the "prophet of lament" or the "weeping prophet". He was determined, dedicated, long-suffering, and a prophetic visionary and model.
3. He was taken into exile to Egypt by his own countrymen where he likely died .

Outline/Structure

1. Jeremiah 1: the Prophet's Call and Ministry
2. Jeremiah 2-29: Israel's Sin
3. Jeremiah 30-33: Israel's Restoration
4. Jeremiah 34-51: Israel and the Nation's Judgment
5. Jeremiah 52: Historical Conclusion

Major Themes: God's Character

5 Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field, and they cannot speak; they have to be carried, for they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good.” 6 There is none like you, O LORD; you are great, and your name is great in might. 7 Who would not fear you, O King of the nations? For this is your due; for among all the wise ones of the nations and in all their kingdoms there is none like you. 8 They are both stupid and foolish; the instruction of idols is but wood! 9 Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz. They are the work of the craftsman and of the hands of the goldsmith; their clothing is violet and purple; they are all the work of skilled men. 10 But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King. At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure his indignation. (Jer. 10:5-10)

Major Themes: Man's Sinfulness

“1 The word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 “Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says the LORD, “I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. 3 Israel was holy to the LORD, the firstfruits of his harvest. All who ate of it incurred guilt; disaster came upon them, declares the LORD.” 4 Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the clans of the house of Israel. 5 Thus says the LORD: “What wrong did your fathers find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthlessness, and became worthless?...12 Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord, 13 for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.” (Jer 2:1-5, 12-13)

Major Themes: Man's Sinfulness

22 Do you not fear me? declares the LORD. Do you not tremble before me? I placed the sand as the boundary for the sea, a perpetual barrier that it cannot pass; though the waves toss, they cannot prevail; though they roar, they cannot pass over it. 23 But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and gone away. 24 They do not say in their hearts, 'Let us fear the LORD our God, who gives the rain in its season, the autumn rain and the spring rain, and keeps for us the weeks appointed for the harvest.' 25 Your iniquities have turned these away, and your sins have kept good from you." Jer 5:22-25

Major Themes: Man's Sinfulness



1 “The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; with a point of diamond it is engraved on the tablet of their heart, and on the horns of their altars....5 Thus says the Lord: “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. 6 He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land....The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? 10 “I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.” Jer 17:1, 5-6, 9-10

Major Themes: Man's Sinfulness

“22 And if you say in your heart, ‘Why have these things come upon me?’ it is for the greatness of your iniquity that your skirts are lifted up and you suffer violence. 23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil.” Jer 13:22-23



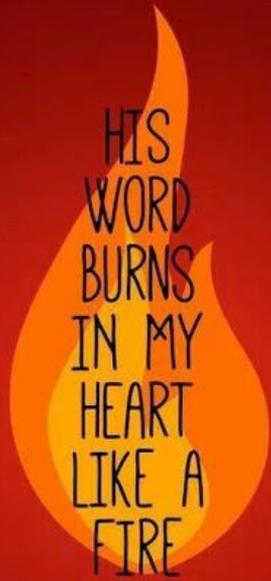
Major Themes: God's Word

“4 Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” 6 Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth.” 7 But the Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. 8 Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the Lord.” 9 Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, “Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. 10 See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.” Jer 1:4-10

Major Themes: God's Word

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Major Themes: God's Word



JEREMIAH 20:9

“8 For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, “Violence and destruction!” For the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. 9 If I say, “I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,” there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.” Jer 20:8-9

Major Themes: God's Judgments

“23 I looked on the earth, and behold, it was without form and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light. 24 I looked on the mountains, and behold, they were quaking, and all the hills moved to and fro. 25 I looked, and behold, there was no man, and all the birds of the air had fled. 26 I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a desert, and all its cities were laid in ruins before the LORD, before his fierce anger. 27 For thus says the LORD, “The whole land shall be a desolation; yet I will not make a full end. 28 “For this the earth shall mourn, and the heavens above be dark; for I have spoken; I have purposed; I have not relented, nor will I turn back.” Jer 4:23-28

Major Themes: God's Judgments



“3 For because of the anger of the LORD things came to the point in Jerusalem and Judah that he cast them out from his presence.” Jer 52:3

Major Themes: God's Messiah

“3 Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. 4 I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD. 5 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’ Jer 23:3-6

Major Themes: God's Messiah

“14 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’” Jer 33:14-16

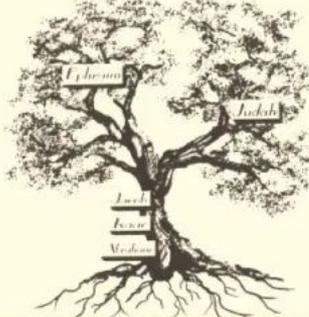
RIGHTEOUS BRANCH

צֶמַח צְדִיק

Tseh-mahkh Tsah-deek

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD,
“when I will raise up to David a righteous branch,
a King who will reign wisely and do what is
just and right in the land.”

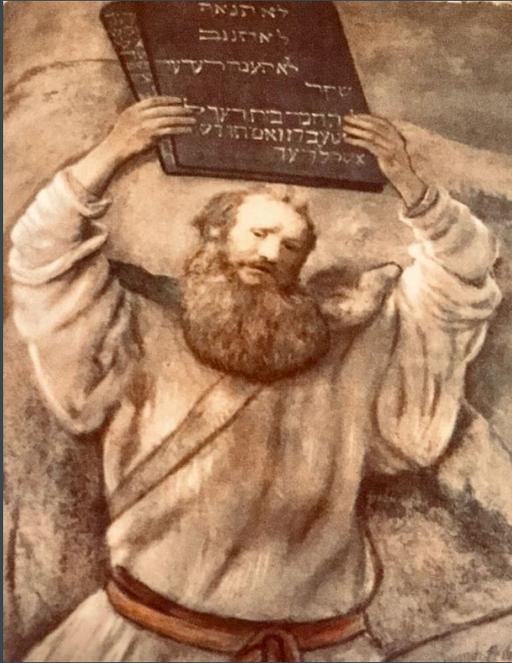
Jeremiah 23:5



Chet חֵט חָטָא
SHOOT FROM THE STUMP OF JESSE
Isaiah 11:1 יֵשׁוּעָה

Tsadik צְדִיק צְדָקָה
RIGHTEOUS BRANCH
Jeremiah 23:5 יְדִמָּה

Major Themes: God's Covenants



8 'And many nations will pass by this city, and every man will say to his neighbor, "Why has the LORD dealt thus with this great city?" 9 And they will answer, "Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God and worshiped other gods and served them." Jer 22:8-9

Major Themes: God's Covenants

“31“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jer 31:31-34

Major Themes: God's Covenants

“38 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. 39 I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. 40 I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. 41 I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.”

Jer 32:38-41

Applications

1. Preach the Word and leave the results to the Lord.
2. Suffering and persecution should be expected and prepared for. Be faithful even unto death.
3. God provides what he commands through the Gospel.

Exploring the Old Testament

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Lamentations



Background of the Book

1. The book is a poetic and literary reflection upon the fall of Jerusalem. The city and her exiles lament the destruction of Judah.
2. Many believe Jeremiah the prophet wrote the book (2 Chron. 35:25) because there are similar themes in Lamentations and within Jeremiah's works as well as the fact that the prophet witnessed the fall and destruction of Jerusalem.
3. The book is ultimately anonymous.

Outline

1. Jerusalem's Misery and Desolation (Ch. 1)
2. The Lord's Wrath Against His People (Ch. 2)
3. Judah's Complaint & the Basis for Consolation (Ch. 3)
4. Contrast Between Zions Past and Present (Ch. 4)
5. Judah's Appeal for Forgiveness and Restoration (Ch. 5)

Major Theme: Sin is absolutely debilitating

“18 Their heart cried to the Lord. O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears stream down like a torrent day and night! Give yourself no rest, your eyes no respite! 19 “Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the night watches! Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord! Lift your hands to him for the lives of your children, who faint for hunger at the head of every street.” 20 Look, O LORD, and see! With whom have you dealt thus? Should women eat the fruit of their womb, the children of their tender care? Should priest and prophet be killed in the sanctuary of the Lord?” Lam 2:18-20

Major Theme: God's Judgments are devastating

“1 How the Lord in his anger has set the daughter of Zion under a cloud! He has cast down from heaven to earth the splendor of Israel; he has not remembered his footstool in the day of his anger. 2 The Lord has swallowed up without mercy all the habitations of Jacob; in his wrath he has broken down the strongholds of the daughter of Judah; he has brought down to the ground in dishonor the kingdom and its rulers. 3 He has cut down in fierce anger all the might of Israel; he has withdrawn from them his right hand in the face of the enemy; he has burned like a flaming fire in Jacob, consuming all around. 4 He has bent his bow like an enemy, with his right hand set like a foe; and he has killed all who were delightful in our eyes in the tent of the daughter of Zion; he has poured out his fury like fire. 5 The Lord has become like an enemy; he has swallowed up Israel; he has swallowed up all its palaces; he has laid in ruins its strongholds, and he has multiplied in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation. 6 He has laid waste his booth like a garden, laid in ruins his meeting place; the LORD has made Zion forget festival and Sabbath, and in his fierce indignation has spurned king and priest. 7 The Lord has scorned his altar, disowned his sanctuary; he has delivered into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; they raised a clamor in the house of the LORD as on the day of festival.” Lam 2:1-7

Major Theme: God's mercy is our only deliverance

“20 My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. 21 But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: 22 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.” 25 The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. 26 It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD. 27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. 28 Let him sit alone in silence when it is laid on him; 29 let him put his mouth in the dust— there may yet be hope; 30 let him give his cheek to the one who strikes, and let him be filled with insults. 31 For the Lord will not cast off forever, 32 but, though he cause grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; 33 for he does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men.” Lam 3:20-33

Applications

1. Flee sin. **Fight** against it. Kill it.
2. Find your hope in the **Lord** alone.
3. It is ok to weep and feel deeply the horrors and lingering **consequences** of sin. We should grieve and lament at times.
4. God punishes and **disciplines** us for our good.