

Lesson 6: Jeremiah 24 - 29

To class attendees: In addition to reading the assigned text above, please note the general themes outlined below, and try to date the chapters based on the chronology noted in the introduction below. The primary point of our study this week is to understand the LORD's redemptive motivation for sending His wayward people into Babylonian exile. This disciplinary action was not just punishment for their evil, but a positive means to help them come to their senses and return to Him. The point here for us is that we may better appreciate the LORD's kind intentions in the midst of life's severities, and respond constructively.

1. Introduction:

A. Foreign exile(s) predicted 700 years prior to Jeremiah's day (Lev 26:32-45, Dt. 28:49-51, 30:1-5)

B. Brief chronology of initial Babylonian exile for Judah/Israel (approximate dates B.C.):

- 605 / 604 - 1st Babylonian invasion of Judah and minor deportation of Daniel and other select youths *7 years later*
- 597 - 2nd Babylonian invasion and major deportation of prominent citizenry incl. surrendering king Jeconiah (Jehoiachin), Ezekiel, skilled tradesmen and military personnel *11 years later*
- 586 - 3rd Babylonian invasion, destruction of Jerusalem and temple, forced deportation of most survivors incl. defiant King Zedekiah *588 siege begins*
- 539 - The fall of the Babylonian empire at the hands of Medo-Persia *Remnant Return to Land*
- 537 - 1st return of Israelite remnant to the Land under leadership of Sheshbazzar *They resist.*

2. 2 Baskets of Figs (chapter 24) Approximate date based on above chronology: 597 B.C. or *little bit after.*

A. The very good figs: *Those who were deported in 597 who surrendered*

B. The very bad figs: *Zedekiah & the ones who stay behind after second deportation. The Lord sees them as the resistant crowd.*

C. Observation: *24:11 After Jechoiniah was deported. It looked like they were "bad crowd" but they surrendered to God's discipline. v.6 "I will PLANT them & NOT PLUCK them up."*

3. The 70-year prophecy (chapter 25) Approximate date based on above chronology: 604 B.C. *The ones surrendering*

A. 23 previous years (3-7) *This is before Nebuchadnezzar's dream.*

B. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon (1, 8) *"My servant" This is where the 70 years dates from.*

C. 70 years (11-14) *Dates from 604 B.C.*

D. *The agent isn't godly but is called "My servant" & after he himself will be disciplined. Habakkuk struggles w/ this: "How can you use such an evil nation to discipline your person."*

E. The cup will be passed around (15-29)

The wine press of the wrath of God. Grapes gathered & stomped on. Metaphor of the Lord bringing judgment.

F. Observation:

Garden of Gethsemane -> "Save me from this cup." Judgment for whole world is being taken.

"Cup" is collection of all blood of those judged. If you drink the cup, you are drinking God's judgment.

4. Proclamation at the temple (chapter 26) This chapter appears to refer to the same occasion noted in chapter 7 where Jeremiah addressed an audience at the temple. Now we find out that he was almost executed for that message.

The judgment we deserve, He takes on himself.

"Beginning of reign of Zedekiah" You would think 396 but it is 594 →
"The first part... of Z's reign."

5. Come under the Yoke (chapters 27-28) Approximate date based on above chronology: 594 B.C.

A. Symbolic act (2) Carry a long yoke in front of leaders in Jerusalem.

Zedekiah decides he is going to rebel. He had sworn by God to be loyal to Neb.

B. Initial audience in addition to Judah (3)

The leaders from surrounding nations.

Ch. 27 Leaders from surrounding nations come for a summit in Jerusalem to form an alliance against Neb.

C. The underlying reality of the situation (4,5)

I give the land to whomever I want & I've chosen to give it to Nebuchadnezzar.

D. Interpretation involving the surrounding nations and Judah (4,22)

If anyone doesn't put their neck under the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar — he will die. If they put themselves under the yoke → they will live.

E. The opposition of Hananiah, the false prophet (28:1-17)

They always seem to be bucking against what God is wanting to do. He breaks Jeremiah's symbolic yoke & says "It's just going to be 2 years."

F. Observation: Response → This isn't wooden yoke that can be broken. It's an iron yoke that can't be broken!

↳ Message of false prophets all along: "Peace! Peace!"

6. Jeremiah's Correspondence with the Babylonian exiles (chapter 29) Approx. date: 597 B.C.

A. Build and plant (in exile) (1-9) v.5 "Build houses. Plant.

Exiles from 2nd deportation had left. Probably shortly thereafter.

Eat produce. Have sons/daughters. Seek welfare of the city. Those who have surrendered are to make

B. Positive Plans (10-14)

the most of the situation they find themselves in. NO pity party from what they have

"When 70 years are completed... of verse 11 is for,

LOST & what has happened to them. God wanted them to PROSPER in Babylon. He didn't want them to die out but to multiply.

C. The message of the false prophets (15-32)

Those resisting can't claim this verse. "We're going to get out of here quickly."

D. Observation:

Embrace this discipline & flourish.

One of signs of a false prophet = sexual immorality & lust.

E. A positive outcome according to archeological evidence: Occupational layers of towns rebuilt by returning exiles do not indicate the rampant presence of IDOLS, as was the case in pre-exilic Judah. Those who returned, did not bring their idols.

7. Closing thoughts on the Discipline of the LORD

In both Testaments, the Hebrew and Greek words commonly translated as 'discipline' involve a wide range of meanings, with an underlying motivation of training, nurturing, and instruction. While the Babylonian exile was a very punitive form of training for the people of Judah, we can see from today's lesson that the LORD's intent was constructive and caring in nature.

All within fabric of caring instruction.

Solomon makes a similar point in Proverbs 3:11-12

My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of His reproof, for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father (does toward) the son in whom he delights.

"I'm doing this because I have kind intentions to prosper you."

Hebrews 12:3-11 reiterates this same principle for the NT believer in Christ. We are being trained/disciplined in order to share in the holiness of God. This training takes different forms. For the audience addressed in Hebrews, it probably included persecution and some doctrinal correctives.

For Christians in general it can also include:

Coming to study this Word → coming under His teaching.

Rubbing shoulders w/ those in our families who rub us. Sometimes

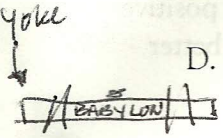
The message from Jeremiah in this regard appears to be:

natural consequences of the STUPID things we do have a natural disciplining effect.

Surrender from our own self-will & every time we feel we have to assert

our position. Help me to put this person first & not push my way.

Help me not to be bucking what you are using to discipline me.



God's YOKE is the path to LIFE.

BUILD PLANT

CONTEXT of verse 11 is for,

those who are surrendered to the LORD's discipline — His yoke on us.

THE LORD'S KIND DISCIPLINE

People are headed toward exile.

Deut./Leviticus → I'm going to let them take you away until you come to your senses.

Jeremiah 21

The Lord's KIND intentions go w/ those who surrender & yield to His

Pain

Correction

Rebuke

It feels counter intuitive that those "giving in" are the good guys & those "standing against Babylon & hanging in there" were the bad guys.

Sometimes standing/hanging in there is nothing more than our own obstinacy.

ch. 25: 8, 9

Nebuchadnezzar = "My servant"

Pharaoh

Surrounding lands of Judah

Metaphorical cup of

Literal judgment.

After they have drunk (70 years) then Babylon (Neb.)

who brings them down will drink & be judged.

Not just Judah who's in trouble - but all the nations are slated & deserving of God's holy judgment.

The biggest issue the nations have → ~~ego~~ & self exaltation.

Short leash of fixed length.

God is holding the leash & Babylon is on the other end.

70 years. They will be dominant & then they will be

Gone.

* God's discipline has a specific duration & purpose.

He's in control of beginning & end of it. He chooses what it will be.

Not just God of Israel, but God of all nations. He has it

orchestrated who goes next, next, next.