

Digging Deeper into Jeremiah 1 for personal study and lifegroups...

Jeremiah 1: The Word Comes

1) Listen up... God speaks in history (v1-3)

Human / Divine / Many / Historical words!

2) Speak up... God speaks through humanity

He's with you & uses your words (v4-10)

He's watching to fulfil his word (v11-12)

He wants the whole message shared (v13-19)

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Welcome to Jeremiah 1-24. This dig deeper will be a bit more of a “wide angle lens” study than normal to give you an introduction to the book, as well as seeking to do some further application of chapter 1. I hope you find it helpful...

1) What do the following verses tell you about **Jeremiah** ...

- His identity:** Jer 1:1, 2-3, 6.
- His experiences:** Jer 20:1-2, 20:7-9, 38:6
- His message of judgement** (destruction): Jer 25:15-16 & 34-38,
- His message of hope** (reconstruction): Jer 31:31-34, 33:14-16

How do you feel about studying the book? Any resolutions on your part (with God's help) to get the most out of it?

2) Where does Jeremiah **fit into the Bible**? (You might like to look at Fig 1 & 2) How does that make a difference to how we read it?

3) It's hard to get a handle on the **structure/chronology** of the book, because it isn't linear. Some have suggested it's just a “scrap book”/“anthology” of different oracles from different times. However the best analysis of the book observes four cycles through the period (see Fig 3). We are looking at cycle 1 in our series. However the main themes of judgement and hope are clear. How does 1:10 help grasp these?

4) Recapping **Jeremiah 1** (where the Hebrew root word for spoke/word/say comes 11 times)... Do you feel it is appropriate to compare us to Jeremiah (bear in mind Acts 2:17)? What lessons are there here for your current Bible reading and Evangelism?

Resources...

- You can't beat **reading the book**. Why not try to read a chapter a day out loud in your devotions. Also see 2 Kings 23-25 for a chronological history.
- <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-jeremiah/> including the video there, though Andrew Shead (Fig 3) divides it slightly differently.
- The [6 page document](#) from **Emmanuel Canterbury** (shared on the Weekly News) is an excellent introduction to the book and worth reading through.

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Fig 1- timeline of Jeremiah in the Bible....

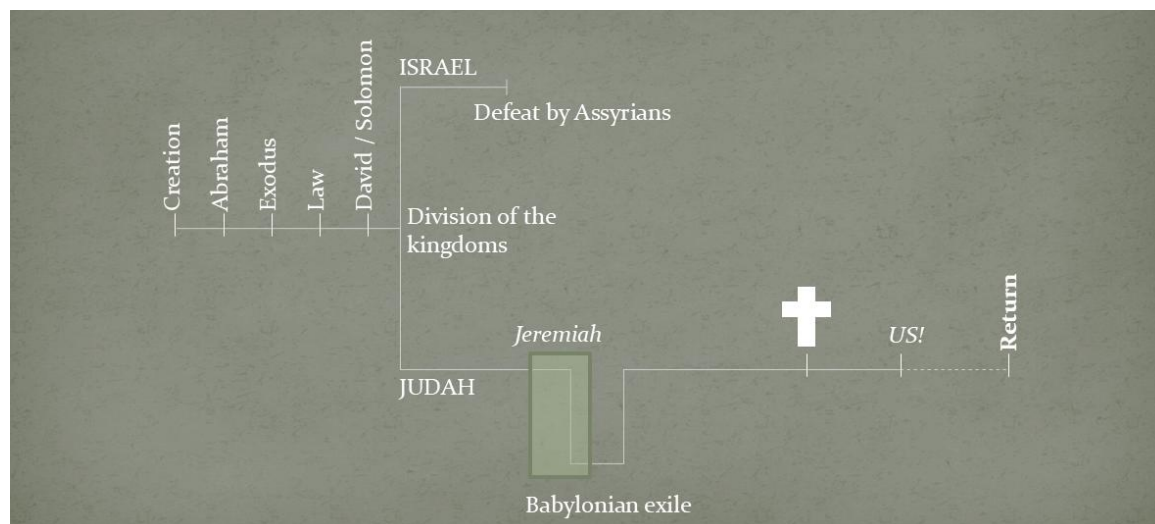


Fig 2- the world of Jeremiah...

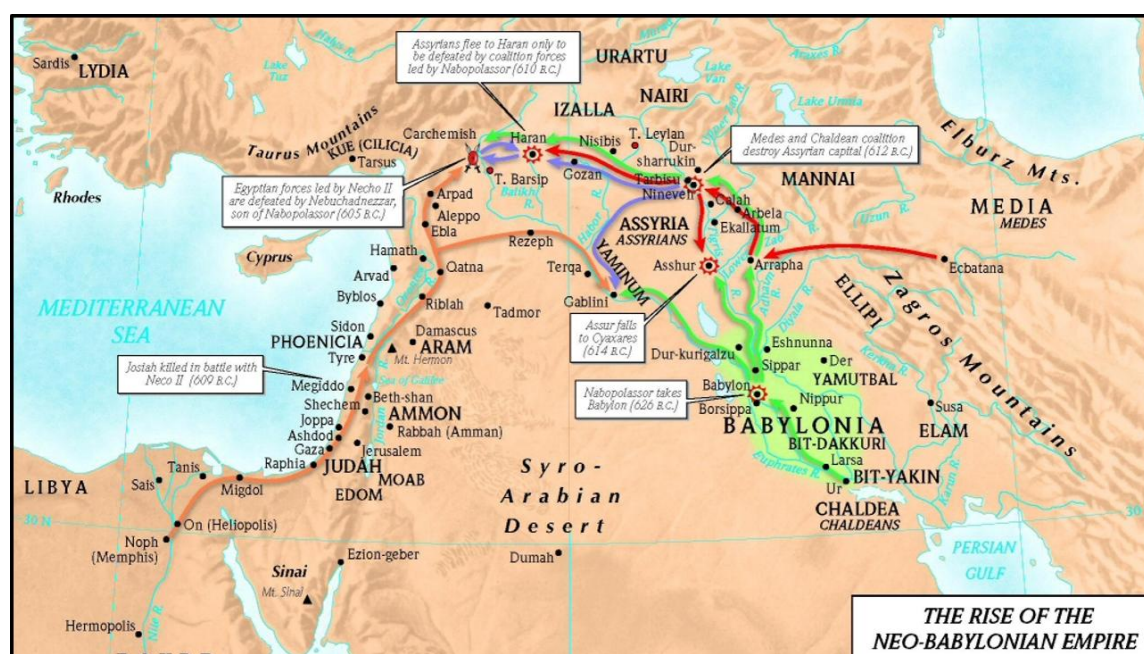


Fig 3- Structure of the book “Neither straightforwardly topical, nor straightforwardly chronological”, taken from Andrew Shead “A mouthful of fire” p86. Our series will cover cycle 1.

1: Prelude

2-24: The word of the LORD announces Judah's destruction and its speaker is crushed

2-6: The fruitless appeal to an adulterous wife, to return to her husband

7-10: The tragic corruption of the temple into a doomed pagan shrine

11-17: The painful consequences of covenant-breaking

18-20: The freedom of God to reject his elect evokes a violent response

21-24: The throne of David in Judah will be vacant

25-34: The word of the LORD vindicates its speaker and offers true hope to deaf listeners

25-29: True prophecy is tested and found to be on the lips of Jeremiah

30-34: A true and revolutionary covenant lies in the future, not the present

35-44: The word of the LORD destroys the nation it created and plants seeds of new life

35-39: The indestructible word exerts its power and the kingdom falls

40-43: The word is silent while the remnant self-destruct

44: No escape, even back in Egypt: God's word will stand

45-51: The word of the LORD sends a tide of judgement across the earth and draws a new nation from the wreckage

45: Baruch, whose scroll preserved the word, will himself be preserved

46:1-51:58: The word of God tears down the nations and draws Israel, alive, from the jaws of death

51:59-64: Seraiah, whose scroll secures Babylon's end, ends Jeremiah's book

52: Appendix: Back to the present, where the word of the LORD lives on

Fig 4- detailed timeline of the book...

Date (BC)	King	Event	Jeremiah / other Bible refs
639	Josiah	Josiah comes to the throne. Implements religious reform. Asserts increasing independence from a weakening Assyria.	1:2; 3:6, 10? 11:1-8? 36:2. 2 Kgs 22-23.
627		The call of Jeremiah.	1:4-19
614		Babylonians conquer Assyrian capital Assur, and later Nineveh.	Nah 3:7
612		Remaining Assyrians ally with Egyptians.	
610	Jehoahaz II (Shallum)	Egyptians move into Palestine in last-ditch attempt to prop up Assyria and keep down Babylon.	
609		Josiah fights Egyptians at Megiddo and is killed. Jehoahaz II succeeds him. Egyptians replace him three months later with Jehoiakim . Jehoiakim pays tribute to Pharaoh Neco. Jeremiah preaches, unpopularity, that Judah should submit to Babylonian rule.	7:1-8:3; 22:11-12; 25:9; 27:6-22. 2 Kgs 23:29-35. 2 Chr 36:1-4
605		Battle of Carchemish: Babylonia (+Medes) beats Egypt (+remnants of Assyria). Nebuchadnezzar becomes king of Babylon.	25:1; 36:1; 45:1; 46:2
604		Nebuchadnezzar sacks Philistine city of Ashkelon. Jehoiakim abandons Egyptians and submits to Babylonians.	36:9-29; 47:5-7. Zeph 2:4-7
601	Jehoiachin (Eliakim)	Babylonians threaten Egypt but fail to defeat them outright. Jehoiakim changes allegiance again from Babylon to Egypt.	2:18, 36. 2 Kgs 24:1
598		Jerusalem attacked by Nebuchadnezzar. Jehoiakim succeeded by Jehoiachin .	22:18-19. 2 Chr 36:6-9
597	Jehoiachin (Coniah)	Jerusalem falls. Temple plundered, but most of city left undamaged. Jehoiachin and most of royal household deported. Nebuchadnezzar appoints Zedekiah king. Zedekiah's officers look to Egypt instead of submitting to Babylon.	24:1; 2 Kgs 24:17; 2 Chr 36
587		Jerusalem again besieged by Babylonians. Jeremiah urges Zedekiah to surrender but he refuses. Jeremiah tries to leave the city and is imprisoned. After some months, Jerusalem falls and is ruined. Second wave of deportations. Zedekiah's sons are killed; he is blinded and taken to Babylon. Gedaliah appointed governor of Judah. Jeremiah freed from prison and treated well. He joins Gedaliah at the new administrative base in Mizpah.	37:3-21, 38:14-23, 40:6
586	Zedekiah (Gedaliah)	Gedaliah murdered. Remnant at Mizpah flee to Egypt against Jeremiah's advice and force him to go with them.	40:13-43:13
581		Third wave of deportations to Babylon. Judah absorbed into neighbouring province of Samaria.	52:30
575?		Jeremiah dies (in Egypt?)	

Note that the year 605 (the battle of Carchemish) is a key turning point in the history of the Ancient Near East. At this point the Babylonians emerge as the key superpower of the time. Each of cycles 2,3,4 (see Fig 3) start at this point during "the fourth year of Jehoiakim" and then cycle through some of the subsequent history. God will judge sin, but he will bring a wonderful future out of the carnage.