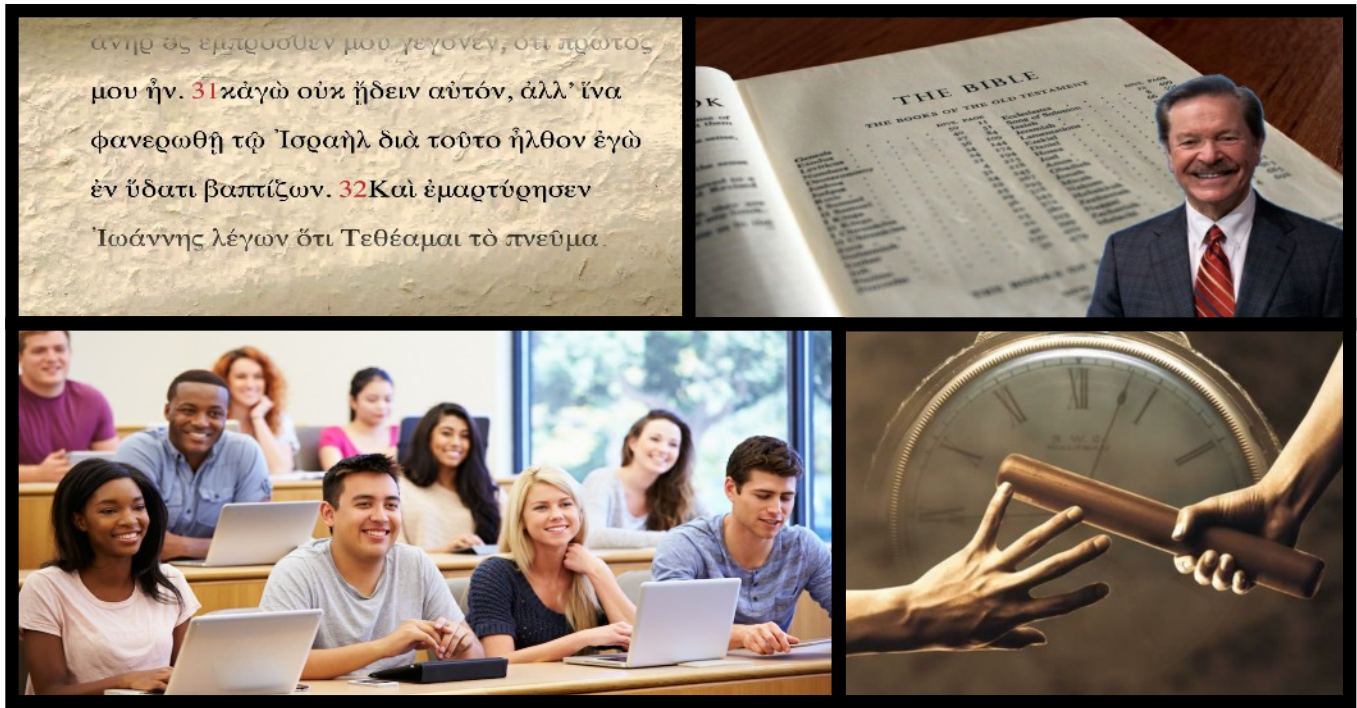


# EMBASSY COLLEGE



## SYLLABUS AND STUDY GUIDE

### The Book of Jeremiah

OT361

Dr. Charles Gaulden

# Course Syllabus

Charles H. Gaulden, D.Min., Instructor

## I. Course Description

This course is an expositional study of the Book of Jeremiah.

## II. Course Rationale

### *A. Philosophical*

1. To examine the components of the Book of Jeremiah and its significance for belief and practice of Christian life.
2. To produce a profound respect for the value of Jeremiah in the life of the Christian and the Church.
3. To introduce students to the key historical points of Jeremiah in their proper contents.

### *B. Practical*

The Book of Jeremiah is foundational to understanding the eternal, incarnational truth of the work of God, in and with His people. This course will assist the student to develop both knowledge and skill with Old Testament scripture for use in his or her personal life and ministerial vocation.

## III. Course Objectives

- A. The student will be able to demonstrate and explain a working knowledge of Jeremiah and its impact on the scripture (Knowledge).

- B. The student will be able to understand and relate the significance of Jeremiah to the whole of the book and scripture as a whole (Comprehension and Synthesis).
- C. The student will be able to identify and summarize the basic aspects of the Babylonian Captivity (Comprehension and Synthesis).
- D. The student will be able to discuss the relationship between the knowledge gained in this class and his or her own theological and spiritual development (Comprehension, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation).

#### **IV. Suggested Tools of Study**

- A. The Bible: The teacher generally uses the New King James. Used by permission from Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- B. This study guide.
- C. Textbook required: R. K. Harrison. *Jeremiah and Lamentations: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, D. J. Wise, general editor. The student should only read pages 1-192. The section on Lamentations will not be covered in this course.

#### **V. Suggested Study Habits**

- A. Read though Jeremiah prayerfully before the class begins.
- B. Study this course workbook and the textbook as much as possible before the course begins.
- C. Do not miss a single class.
- D. Take many notes.

## **VI. Classroom Methodology**

- A. Lecture followed by class discussion.
- B. Questions and answers are encouraged at appropriate times.

## **VII. Final Exam**

The final exam is taken from the textbook and the syllabus.

## **VIII. Selected Bibliography**

Aharoni, Yohanan, Michael Avi-yonah, Anson F. Rainey, and Ae'ev Safra. *The Macmillan Bible Atlas*. 3d ed., rev. New York: Macmillan, 1993.

Bright, John. *Jeremiah, Anchor Bible*. Vol. 21. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1979.

Brown, Francis, S. R. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907.

Craigie, Peter C. *Ugarit and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1985.

Hoerth, Alfred J. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998.

Kaiser, Walter C. *Toward an Old Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Academic Books, 1978.

Keil, C. F., and Delitzsch. *Commentary on the Old Testament*. Translated by James Martin. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989.

Kenyon, Kathleen M. *Jerusalem*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967.

Pfeiffer, Charles F. *Old Testament History*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987.

Thompson, J. A. *The Book of Jeremiah*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980.

Wiersbee, Warren W. *Be Decisive*. Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Book, 1995.

Welch, A. C. *Post-exilic Judaism*. Edinburgh: W. Blackwood, 1935.



## Book Outline From Nelson's Bible Dictionary

### **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
- II. The Conflicts of Jeremiah 26:1-29:32
- III. The Future Restoration of Jerusalem 30:1-33:26
- IV. The Present Fall of Jerusalem 34:1-45:5

### **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

### **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 Release of Jehoiachin 52:31-34

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# Lesson One: "The Young Prophet"

## Jeremiah 1:1-19

### Introduction:

Jeremiah was perhaps twenty years old when God came to him in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign (626 B.C.). Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah are the order mentioned of these three works as preserved in *Baba Bathra 14b*. Ezekiel and Isaiah, along with Jeremiah, exhibit striking divergences between the MT and LXX versions. Numerous manuscripts, especially from French and German sources, have placed Jeremiah at the head of the Latter Prophets.

The precise meaning of the name Jeremiah is unknown, with suggested interpretation including "the Lord found," "the Lord exalts," and "the Lord throws down." About the time that Jeremiah was born, Josiah came to the throne at the tender age of eight. After Josiah instituted his reforms in Jerusalem, Jeremiah received a divine call to prophesy to the people of Judah. In 1935, eighteen potsherds inscribed in ancient Hebrew script were discovered and vividly illustrated the last days of Judah. A century later three more potsherds were discovered. Ostrakon III, written by Hoshaiiah, the author of Ostrakon IV, made reference to a "certain Prophet" who was otherwise not identified.

Four additional tablets of the Babylonian Chronicle were discovered by D. J. Wiseman in the archives of the Middle East museum. The four additional tablets illuminated the history of the period 626 and 594 B.C. The material from the four additional tablets furnished the first religious account of the fall of Jerusalem. Excavations near the Ishtar Gate uncovered tablets which listed "Yaukin King of the land of Yahud" as a recipient of royal bounty.

Jeremiah revealed his personal feelings, which among the Hebrew prophets is unusual. Jeremiah went so far as to say that he would never speak in the divine name according to Jeremiah 20:9. At an early stage in Jeremiah's ministry, he was forbidden to marry. Jeremiah made pointed pronouncements against Jerusalem and the Temple and therefore resembled Micah before him.

1. The Task Was \_\_\_\_\_ (1:1)

In his ministry, Jeremiah had to be:

- \* a destroyer and a builder—1:9-10
- \* a pillar and a wall—1:17-18
- \* a watchman—6:17
- \* a tester of metals—6:27-30
- \* a physician—8:11, 21-22
- \* a sacrificial lamb —11:19
- \* a long-distance runner —12:5
- \* a shepherd—13:17, 20-21; 17:16, 23
- \* a troublemaker—15:10, 15-17

Evidence, supported by modern archaeological discoveries, refers to the Book of Jeremiah as amenable to illustration.

2. The \_\_\_\_\_ Were Difficult (1:2-3; 2 Kings 21-25; 2 Chron. 33-36).

Consider what the history of Judah was like during Jeremiah's lifetime:

Within Jeremiah's lifetime he witnessed the collapse of the mighty Assyrian empire and the rise of a virile Babylonian regime. Upon fleeing to Harran, the disorganized Assyrians found an ally in Pharaoh Psammetichus. Josiah marched to Megiddo in 609 B.C. in an attempt to block the advance of the Egyptian forces. The Egyptians, at the battle of the city of Carchemish, lost the battle and retreated in considerable disorder to Hamath on the Orontes. A previously unrecorded



engagement between Egypt and Babylon occurred in 601 B.C., in which, according to the chronicle, both sides sustained severe losses.

### 1) Rebellion instead of \_\_\_\_\_

To begin with, Jeremiah was born during the reign of King Manasseh, the most evil man who ever reigned over the kingdom of Judah (2 Kings 21:1-18). The son of godly Hezekiah, Manasseh came to the throne when only twelve years old, and the officials around him easily influenced him toward idolatry. Manasseh “seduced them [the people of Judah] to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the Children of Israel” (v. 9, NKJV). When Manasseh died, his evil son Amon continued his father’s evil practices.

While there was no evidence that the pagan excesses of Manasseh’s reign arose once more in Judah, some of the current Canaanite religious practices came into vogue.

### 2) Reformation Instead of \_\_\_\_\_

In 639 B.C., some of Amon’s servants assassinated him; Josiah his son became king, reigning until his untimely death in 609. Josiah was quite young when he began to reign, but he had godly counselors like Hilkiah, and thus he sought the Lord. In the twelfth year of his reign, he began to purge the land of idolatry; six years later, he commanded the priests and workers to repair and cleanse the temple. It was during that time that Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law in the temple and had it read to the king. This document may have been the entire five books of Moses or just the Book of Deuteronomy. Hilkiah may have ministered in the Temple after the reformation of Josiah in 621 B.C.

Jeremiah looked forward to a time when the old Sinatic covenant would be replaced by individual fellowship with God. Jeremiah consistently advocated the ideals of the covenantal concept reflected in the Book of Deuteronomy, which is a covenant-renewal document. In Deuteronomy and secular Near Eastern international treaties the phrase “to go after” meant “to serve as a vassal.”



### 3) Politics Instead of \_\_\_\_\_

No sooner did Josiah die on the battlefield and his son become king than the nation quickly returned to idolatry under the rule of Jehoahaz. But Pharaoh Necho removed Jehoahaz from the throne, exiled him to Egypt where he died, and placed his brother Eliakim on the throne, giving him the name Jehoiakim. Jehoiakim, however, was no better than his brother and “did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done” (2 Kings 23:37). He taxed the people heavily in order to pay tribute to Egypt, and then he agreed to pay tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. After Jehoiakim reneged on that promise, Nebuchadnezzar took him prisoner to Babylon and took the temple vessels with him (597 B.C.).

Jehoiakim’s son Jehoiachin reigned only three months; then his uncle Mattaniah, Josiah’s third son (1 Chron. 3:15), was made king and renamed Zedekiah. Zedekiah was the last king of Judah, a weak, vacillating man who feared his officials more than he feared the Lord (Jer. 38:19). “And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord” (2 Chron. 36:12). Zedekiah would ask Jeremiah for help while at the same time courting ambassadors from neighboring nations and plotting rebellion against Babylon. He allowed his princes to persecute and even imprison Jeremiah, though he himself had secret meetings with the prophet as if he were seeking God’s will. Jerusalem continued to resist the Babylonian siege and King Zedekiah was unwilling or unable to surrender though Jeremiah urged him to.

How Jehoiakim met his death is unknown, and thus it cannot be said for certain that he was assassinated in the hope that the Babylonians would be more lenient with the people of Judah. The material referred to in Jeremiah 36:18 covering the events of the period beginning about 626 B.C. were destroyed by Jehoiakim in 605/604 B.C.

Restricting his activities to the deportation of King Jehoiachin and apart from plundering the Temple, Nebuchadnezzar did not ravage the city when it fell in 597 B.C. According to Jeremiah 29:21, Nebuchadnezzar seems to have executed certain Judean prophets. The once-prosperous kingdom of Judah, on orders of Nebuchadnezzar and perhaps in reprisal for the murder of Gedaliah, was absorbed into the province of Samaria in 581 B.C.