

Handout: Jeremiah Lesson 14

Chapter 29 divides into three sections:

1. The introduction to the letter Jeremiah sent to the Babylonian exiles in verses 1-3.
2. The content of the letter Jeremiah sent to the Babylonian exiles in verses 4-23.
3. The consequences of Jeremiah's first letter that result in a second letter in verses 24-32.

The body of Jeremiah's letter in 29:4-23 divides into five parts:

1. God's advice on how to live in exile (verses 4-7).
2. God's warnings concerning false prophets (verses 8-9).
3. The promise of God's good plans for the exiles after their return (verses 10-14).
4. The Babylonian conquest is God's doing because they refused to listen to His prophets (verses 15-20).
5. God's judgment on three false prophets who dare to claim they speak in His name (verses 21-23).

Chapters 30:1-31:40 is a poetic composition called "Jeremiah's Book of Consolation" because it looks forward to the exile's return to the land and the good things God has promised them (Jer 29:11-14). In its position following chapters 26-29, which focus on Babylonia as the instrument of Yahweh's divine action, Chapters 30-31 support Jeremiah's message of consolation once the prescribed seventy years of the exile are completed. The composition contains Messianic prophecies #s 4-8 that are only fulfilled in Jesus Christ:

4. The Messiah will be born a king and descendant of David	Jer 30:9	Lk 1:32-33; Jn 18:37; Rev 1:5
5. The massacre of infants	Jer 31:15	Mt 2:17-18
6. The Incarnation: "something new on earth"	Jer 31:22b	Mt 1:20; Lk 1:35
7. A New Covenant	Jer 31:31-33	Mt 26:27-29; Mk 14:22-24; Lk 22:15-20; 1Cor 11:25; Heb 8:8-12; 10:15-17; 12:24; 13:20
8. The Gospel of salvation and the forgiveness of sins	Jer 31:34	Mt 26:26-28; Heb 10:16-18; 1 Jn 2:27

For the complete list, see the handout in Lesson 3.

The Book of Consolation in chapters 30-31 begins with the typical prophetic word formula, "The word which came to Jeremiah from Yahweh," as an introduction to the document (30:1-2). However, the repeated prophetic messenger formula of "Yahweh, God of Israel, says this/Yahweh says this" is used ten times (30:2, 5, 12, 18; 31:2, 7, 15, 16, 23, 37), marking the individual ten oracles which comprise the complete text.

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There are two different interpretations concerning God’s command to write down all His words in a book/scroll in Jeremiah 30:2:

1. All the oracles recorded since the beginning of Jeremiah’s ministry should be collected into one book.
2. In addition to the past oracles, these new oracles should be collected in a separate book or booklet.

In either interpretation, the ultimate purpose is to fully vindicate Jeremiah’s role as a true prophet when his prophetic words are fulfilled at some future date (28:9).

The Restoration and pardoning of the covenant people in Oracles 4 and 5 (Jer 30:18-31:6): The blessings of the restoration for which the people will give thanks include:

1. Their towns will be rebuilt.
2. Their population will increase.
3. They will be united as a people.
4. Their enemies will be diminished.
5. A prince from their people will rule over them.

In 31:4, it is God’s plan to restore His people to their covenant relationship as His Virgin Bride when they returned to the land as a redeemed people. The covenant people have played the “adulteress/harlot” in running after pagan gods, and they have been humiliated and abandoned by the false gods who were powerless to help them in the conquest of the Babylonians. However, the restoration to covenant union with Yahweh is coming, even if the return from the exile is only a prelude to a full and complete restoration in the future era of the Messiah.

<b>Image Groups</b>	<b>Part I Covenant relationship</b>	<b>Part II Rebellion</b>	<b>Part III Redemptive Judgment</b>	<b>Part IV Restoration Fulfilled</b>
<b>Covenant Marriage</b>  [examples in Scripture]	Israel Bride of Yahweh Isaiah 61:10-11; Jeremiah 2:2; Ezekiel 16:4-14	Unfaithful adulteress/harlot 23:1-12; Isaiah; 1:21; Jeremiah 3:6-8; 13:22-23, 26; 23:10; Ezekiel 16:15-34; Hosea 4:10-14	Humiliated, abused & abandoned by lovers Jeremiah 3:1b-2; 4:30-31; Ezekiel 16:23-61; 23:35-49; Amos 4:7-8; Hosea 2:4-15	The Bride restored to her Bridegroom  John 3:28-29; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2;9; 22:17

- ◆ Part I: Yahweh and his people enter into a covenant relationship similar to a marriage covenant. Yahweh binds His Bride, Israel, to Himself in the blessings of security and prosperity in return for obedience to the Sinai Covenant.
- ◆ Part II: The covenant people apostatize from the Laws of the Sinai Covenant; they are unfaithful to God by playing the harlot in running after false gods.
- ◆ Part III: God punishes His unfaithful people. The false gods/lovers abandon Israel who is left wounded and humiliated.
- ◆ Part IV: In response to the people’s repentance, Yahweh forgives and restores His people to a loving covenant relationship. Israel is once again the chaste, Virgin Bride of her Divine Bridegroom.