

October 10–16: Jeremiah 1–3; 7; 16–18; 20, “Before I Formed Thee in the Belly I Knew Thee”

The Time of Jeremiah

Recall from a previous reading assignment we learned that the Assyrians captured the Northern Kingdom and was challenging Southern Kingdom. King Hezekiah sought and heeded Isaiah’s council and the Lord delivered Jerusalem from the Assyrians

Jeremiah's time as a prophet is a very significant time in the history of Judea. It goes from the last righteous king (Josiah, grandson of Hezekiah) to the captivity of Jews by the Babylonians and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple

627 BC Jeremiah is called by God. Josiah (age 21) has been king for 13 years

Josiah harkens to Jeremiah and repairs the temple, renews the Covenant between the Lord and the people of Israel, renews the celebrates the Passover.

612 BC The fall of the Assyrian Empire

This would cause a power vacuum in the area that Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon would fight to fill

609 BC Josiah dies in a battle against Egyptians

After his death all 3 of Josiah's sons would become king at some point. All 3 were wicked kings and the renewed righteousness ushered in by Josiah would quickly come to an end

608 BC Jehoanaz (2nd son) is anointed king. Three months later Egypt takes him captive and installs Jeoiakim (1st son) as a puppet-king. Judea pays a heavy tribute to Egypt

605 BC Nebuchadnezzar takes control of Syria and Israel. Judea now pays the heavy tribute to the Babylonians.

601 BC Babylon wins the war against Egypt and gains complete control of the region

But Babylon suffers heavy losses. Judea takes advantage of Babylons weakness and stops paying the annual tribute

597 BC Nebuchadnezzar lays his first siege on Jerusalem.

Jehoiakim (1st son) dies during a siege

Josiah’s grandson, Jehoiachin is anointed king.

When Jerusalem is taken Jehoiachin is taken captive along with 10,000 Israelites.

Zedekiah (3rd son) is installed as a puppet-king of Babylon.

The riches of the temple and palace were taken

2Kng 24:14

14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.

What other prophet began his ministry in Jerusalem at this time?

(in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah (1Ne 1:4))

Lehi and his family will leave Jerusalem in a few years. It's interesting to note that as we see the Jewish nation come to an end we see the beginning of the Nephite civilization

587 BC Zedekiah revolts against Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar begins a siege on Jerusalem that lasts for 1 1/2 years.

When they broke through the walls they razed Jerusalem (including the temple) to the ground

They killed Zedekiah and his sons

Except Mulek - an infant or unborn son

570 BC Jeremiah dies in captivity in Egypt

Jeremiah's Calling

Jer 1:4-5

4 Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

What does this teach us about the pre-existence?

(I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet)

Joseph Smith

“Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of Heaven before this world was”. (TPJS, pg. 365)

Wendy Nelson

“I've seen [President Nelson] be clear about doctrine. I've seen him become younger. I've seen him become happier because he's doing what he came to earth to do.... He was foreordained to be the prophet of God on the earth today.”

"I have seen him changing in the last ten months. It is as though he's been unleashed. He's free to finally do what he came to earth to do."
(mormonnewsroom.org, Oct 30, 2018)

Jeremiah expresses his weaknesses and the Lord promises to support and uplift him

Jer 1:6-10,17-19

6 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

7 ¶ But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

8 Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.

9 Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

10 See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

17 ¶ Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.

18 For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.

19 And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.

What did the Lord call Jeremiah to do?

(arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee
I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out,
and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant)

What did the Lord promise Jeremiah He would do to help him fulfill his calling?

(I am with thee to deliver thee
I have put my words in thy mouth
I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen
walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah)

Jeremiah Admonishes Judea to Repent

Jeremiah gives us a parable of the wickedness of the North and South kingdoms

Jer 3:6-11

6 ¶ The Lord said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

7 And I said after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it.

8 And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

9 And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks.

10 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

What does Jeremiah liken Israel too?

(and there hath played the harlot
her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also)

Under the Law of Moses that the man would divorce his wife for this. In fact, he could have her stoned.

In this parable the Norther Kingdom was 'put away', but not yet Judah, even though she had been just as guilty

Heber J. Grant

"By the laws of Moses, adulterers were stoned to death. God said to Israel: 'There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel...' (Deut 23:17). When God, through Jeremiah, chastened Israel for apostasy, He pictured her loathsomeness by calling her a harlot." (CR, Oct. 1942)

He uses the analogy of comparing them to a marred vessel that the potter needs to redo

Jer 18:1-6

1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying,

2 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

5 Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

6 O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.

How is Israel like clay while the Lord is like a potter?

(verse 4)

Heber C. Kimball

"There are many vessels that are destroyed after they have been moulded

and shaped. Why? Because they are not contented with the shape the potter has given them, but straightaway put themselves into a shape to please themselves; therefore they are beyond understanding what God designs, and they destroy themselves by the power of their own agency. [These people] have to go through a great many modellings and shapes, then... have to be glazed and burned; and even in the burning, some vessels crack". (Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer, Stanley B. Kimball, pg. 270)

He directly confronts them about the wickedness that they have committed

Jer 2:12-13

12 Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord.

13 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

What two evils does Jeremiah point out that the Jews committed?

(they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water)

Bruce R. McConkie

"Israel forsook Jehovah, from whom living waters flow, and worshipped other gods. Israel no longer drank the living water, which, if men drink, they shall never thirst more. Rather she made her own churches, her own cisterns —'broken cisterns,' false churches—which can hold none of the waters of life. (The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man, pg. 187)

Jeremiah promises the people that they can avoid all the destruction that awaits them if they obey just one very important commandment...

Jer 17:21-25

21 Thus saith the Lord; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem;

22 Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers.

23 But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction.

24 And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein;

25 Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever.

What one commandment is Jeremiah asking the people to obey?

(hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers)

What is promised if they obey this one commandment?

The men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever (verse 25)

What does that tell us about the importance of keeping the sabbath day holy?

Bruce R. McConkie

“The Sabbath is the leaven of life. Our conduct on all days is influenced by what we do on the Lord's day. Ancient Israel received this command: ‘Bear no burden on the sabbath day.... Hallow ye the sabbath day.’ That is: ‘Rest from your labors, and worship the Lord.’ Had they done so, the Lord would have preserved their kingdom forever (Jeremiah 17:20-27). Similarly, if we would keep the Sabbath, the Lord would bless and prosper us beyond anything we have ever known.” (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, pg. 301)

Gathering of Israel

Jeremiah, as with other prophets of his time, had no hope in the Israel of their day. But they rejoiced in the Israel of the latter-days. Lets read some of the teachings of Jeremiah concerning our day.

Jer 3:12-15

12 ¶ Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever.

13 Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord.

14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:

15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

How does Jeremiah describe the gathering in the last days?

(I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion)

What does the Lord promise Israel to provide for them to ensure that they will understand His will?

(And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you

with knowledge and understanding)

Gordon B. Hinckley

“We think of our brothers and sisters in distant lands. We have met hundreds of thousands of you, have looked into your faces, have felt of your spirits. You are so very precious to this work. The Lord has gathered you ‘one of a city, and two of a family,’ as prophesied by Jeremiah. He is teaching you with pastors after His own heart. We pray for you, we visit you, we respect and admire you, we love you. We are all part of a great family.” (CR, Oct. 1998)

After the latter-day gathering there will be things sacred to ancient Israel that will no longer be relevant

Jer 3:16-19

16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more.

17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.

18 In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.

19 But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.

What did ancient Israel need that will no longer be relevant when Israel is gathered again?

(in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind)

Why do you think that is?

Roy L. Huntington

“Building faith among latter-day Israel will not depend upon constant visual signs as it did in ancient times. God consistently reminded Moses’s people of His divine presence and redeeming love through miracles and visual signs.... In contrast, Jeremiah made clear that in the last days ‘they shall say no more, the ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind...’. The ark of the covenant was a representation of God’s presence and power. Modern Israel, however, will not need the physical presence of the ark to remind them of God. Instead,... modern Israel will remember God through their ordinances, their covenants, and the voice of God’s Spirit.”

(“Jeremiah and the New paradigm of the Gathering,” Religious Educator 9, no. 2 (2008): 83–90)

After the latter-day gathering there will be events considered miraculous to ancient Israel that will no longer be constantly considered

Jer 16:14-16

14 ¶ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt:
15 But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

16 ¶ Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

What event will be more remarkable to Israel than their deliverance from Egypt?

(The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them)

LeGrand Richards

“Just contemplate that statement for a few moments. Think how the Jews and the Christians all through these past centuries have praised the Lord for his great hand of deliverance under the hands of Moses when he led Israel out of captivity, and yet here comes Jeremiah with this word of the holy prophet, telling us that in the latter days they shall no more remember that, but how God has gathered scattered Israel from the lands whither he had driven them....”

“The Prophet Joseph Smith received the truth and sent the messengers out to share it with the world. Thus have they gone out, fishing and hunting, and gathering them from the hills and the mountains, and the holes in the rocks. I think that is more literal than some of us think!” (CR, April, 1971)