

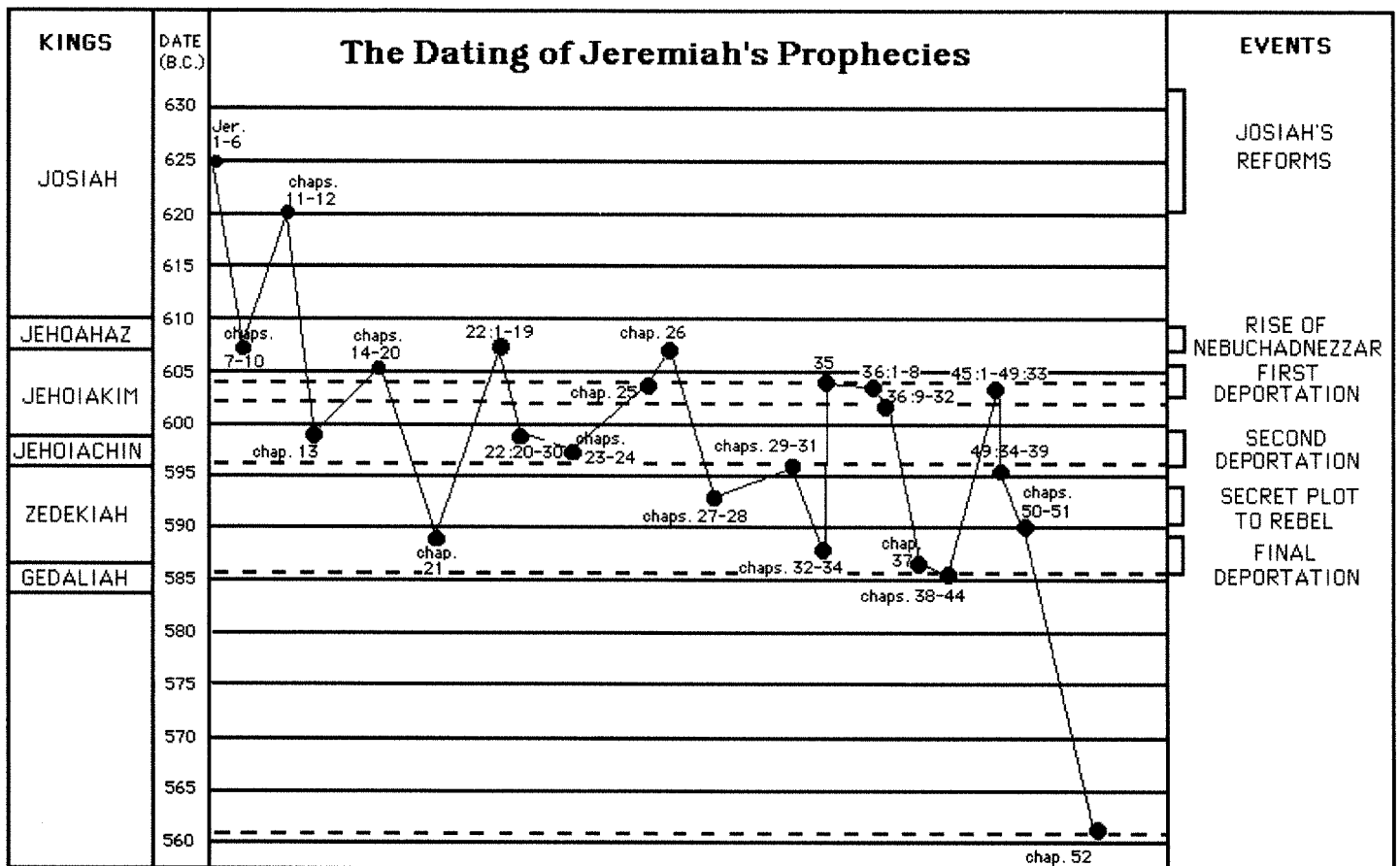
**Series: Bible Survey**

**Lesson: 33. Jeremiah A**

- **Introduction**

- Author: Jeremiah (*not* the bullfrog)
  - He was the son of a priest from Anathoth, so it is likely he served as a priest for at least some of his life.
  - He was called as a prophet at a relatively early age.
  - He never married as a sign of God's judgment on Judah.
  - He dictated at least some (if not all) of his messages to his personal scribe, Baruch.
  - We see way more personality and reactions from him than from any other writing prophet.
- Date: He was writing during at least 627–586 BC (cf. 1:2–3), but the book includes events all the way until 561 BC.
- Context:
  - Manasseh's reign had already brought Judah into such immorality and idolatry that judgment had become inevitable (cf. 2 Ki. 21; Jer. 15:4), but his repentance led to God's promise that it wouldn't happen until a later generation who wouldn't repent (cf. 2 Chron. 33).

- Jeremiah covers the time period in 2 Kings 22–25 and 2 Chronicles 34–36; his prophetic ministry would have overlapped with Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Daniel, and Ezekiel.
  - His prophecies began in the 13<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah who had begun reforms in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> years of his reign. He discovered the book of the Law a few years later in his 18<sup>th</sup> year (cf. 2 Chron. 34).
  - Despite the temporary relief from Josiah’s faithfulness in restoring biblical worship, the people’s hearts were still far from God, so judgment came upon them over the course of the last few faithless kings, and Jeremiah was there to witness all of it and to oppose their wickedness.
  - Historically, this judgment played out over a depressing period of political intrigue and military defeat that saw both Egypt and Babylon deposing and replacing kings in Judah, as well as three deportations of people to Babylon.
- Jeremiah is written as a collection of ~21 distinct messages/narratives over several decades that individually addressed topics of their day and/or zoomed out to larger issues.
    - There are many smaller lessons and highly memorable/quotable passages throughout.
    - The messages are *not* in chronological order, so the reader needs to follow the thematic development created by how they are arranged.



- God's Value of \_\_\_\_\_
  - This is the foundation on which God's relationships with human beings are built.
  - It means a very real and binding expectation of \_\_\_\_\_, not just lip service or even strict legal adherence.
  - Israel ends up under judgment for breaking the Old Covenant by losing the ingredients for keeping it: no more king, a destroyed Temple, an executed priesthood, and removal from the Land.

- Covenant is more than a legal arrangement: it is a state of relationship with legitimate expectations as a result, hence why God addresses Judah as a Father Who expects obedience (cf. 35).
  
- Claiming God's name doesn't guarantee that He will be  
'\_\_\_\_\_.'

  - God announced He would be *actively* against Judah because they had so thoroughly broken the covenant with Him.
  - Today, God is not ambivalent toward those who claim to be Christian but deny everything the Bible says (let alone toward apostates), but actively opposed to them, even if He may allow some measure of earthly success for a time.

  
- Israel's failure under the Old Covenant required the establishment of the New Covenant.
  - This is the biggest theological contribution of Jeremiah.
  - The Old Covenant was conditional, and they were unable to keep it, leading to their judgment.
  - The New Covenant is *unconditional* because it is no longer mutual: God carries it out Himself by putting His Law on people's hearts so they no longer betray Him to the point of incurring judgment and by forgiving sin so they no longer deserve judgment.

*Jer. 31:31–34 – “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup>not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. <sup>33</sup>“But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. <sup>34</sup>They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the Lord, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”*

- This concept is so foundational to Jeremiah that his first message is one about judgment for breaking the Old Covenant, yet the book ends with an obvious sign that the other covenants will yet be fulfilled.

- **The \_\_\_\_\_ of proclaiming God’s Word**

- Jeremiah’s 40-year prophetic ministry only produced two recorded converts, yet he was clearly in God’s will during his entire (visibly) fruitless ministry.
- Instead, he received active physical opposition from the people who *supposed* to be God’s people.

- The people were so blinded by sin that they didn't just ignore messages from God; they actively \_\_\_\_\_ them.
- What the people were really interested in were false prophets telling them everything would work out okay despite ignoring everything God said.

*2 Tim. 4:3-4 – For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, <sup>4</sup>and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.*

- Jeremiah is burdened by the call to proclaim God's Word so that he is torn between his dread of both the need to share it and the consequences that will follow.

*Jer. 20:8-9 – For each time I speak, I cry aloud;  
I proclaim violence and destruction,  
Because for me the word of the Lord has resulted  
In reproach and derision all day long.  
<sup>9</sup>But if I say, "I will not remember Him  
Or speak anymore in His name,"  
Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire  
Shut up in my bones;  
And I am weary of holding it in,  
And I cannot endure it.*

- Not all of us are called to be pastors, but all of us *are* burdened to proclaim God's Word, *especially* when it's not popular and *especially* to the people who claim to be godly but are actually \_\_\_\_\_, knowing that we may suffer consequences for it.

**Discussion:**

1. How would you explain the concept of 'covenant' (biblically) to an unbeliever or to a new believer?
2. How can we be encouraged by such an 'unsuccessful' ministry as Jeremiah's?

**FOR REFLECTION:** Do you tend to focus too much on your relationship with God to on your obligations to God? What biblical truths can help you keep the two in balance?

**Blanks:** covenants, loyalty, on your side, burden, contradicted, hypocrites