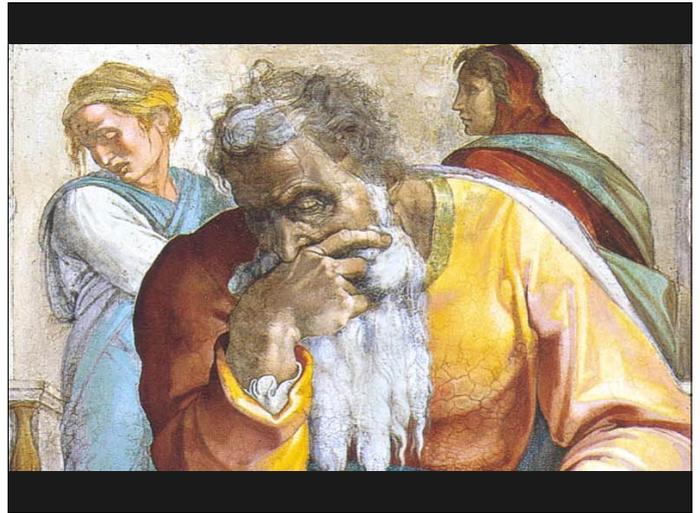


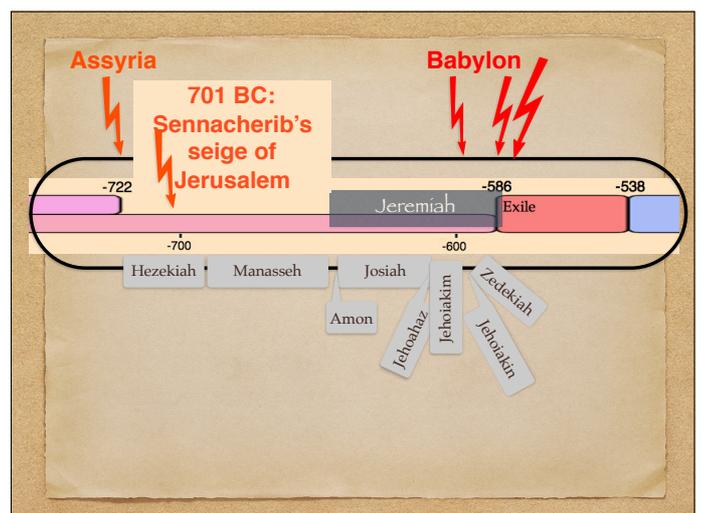
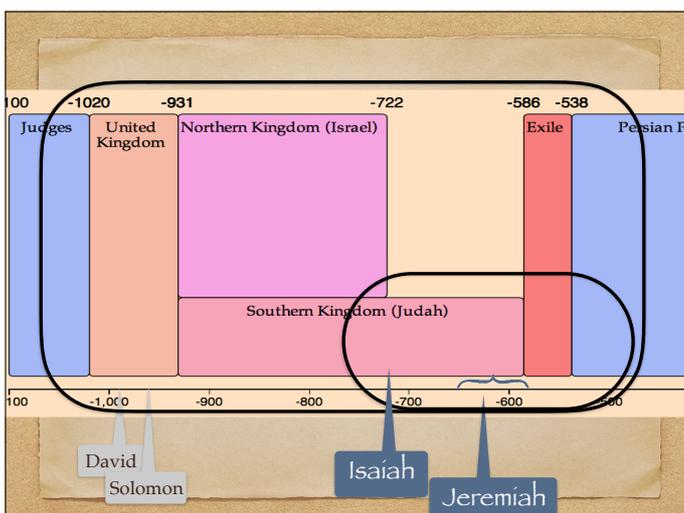
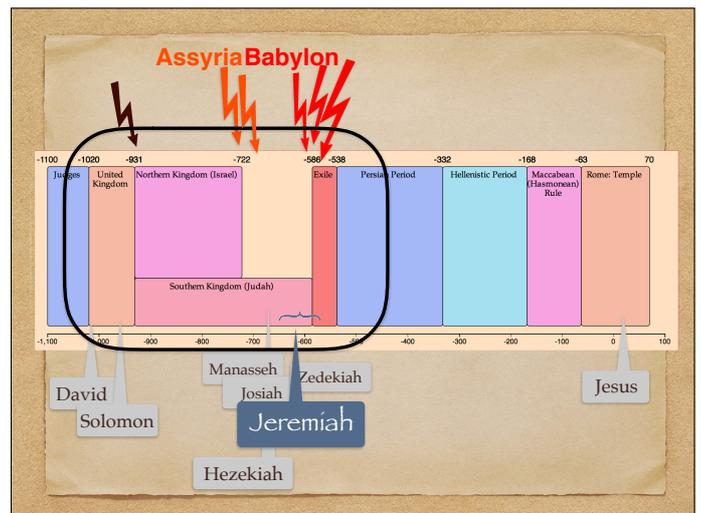
Jeremiah

and his contemporaries



Quiz with purpose

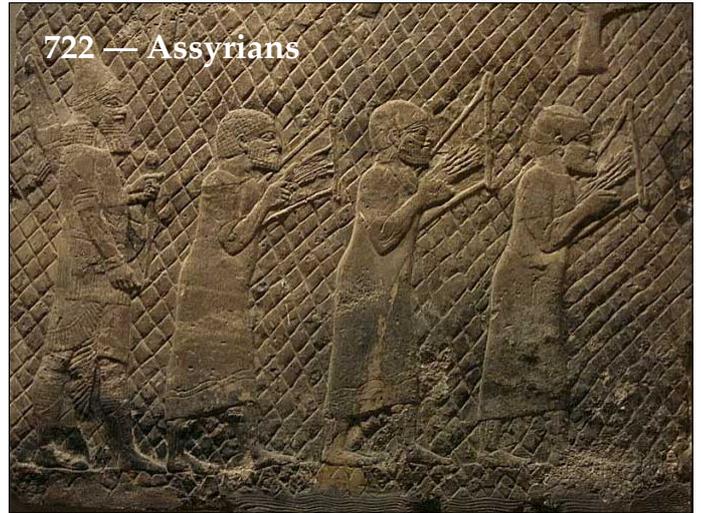
1. What was J's social background in Judah?
2. Was he married, and did he have children?
3. Was he wrongly accused? harassed? arrested?
4. Was he ever tortured?
5. Was he subjected to physical punishment?
6. Was he literate?
7. Was he respected?
8. Did he intercede for Judah?
9. Did he go to parties and funerals?
10. Where did he die?



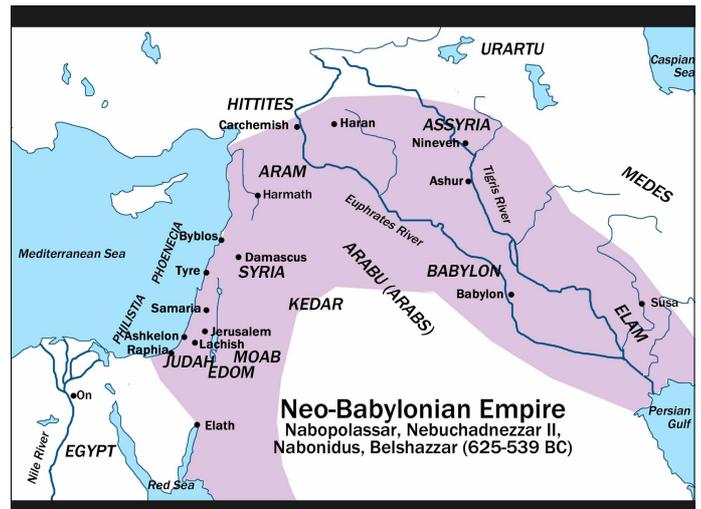
722 — Assyrians



722 — Assyrians



586 — Babylonians



the big questions of Jeremiah's times

- Are our children safe?
- Is our city, country, faith going to be destroyed? Will we be killed?
- Why is this happening? What sort of a God would allow this to happen?
- Is it right for children to suffer for family decisions?
- Can we trust our Scriptures? Are they even from God?
- Can we trust our quarrelling prophets? Which ones?
- What possible good can come from so much suffering?
- Is it disloyal to disagree? Are his warnings treasonous?

(the big questions *from* Jeremiah's times)

- Why was he so hated?
- How can we even read it?
- How is it relevant to us?
- Is it helpful?
- "What possible good can come from so much suffering?"

the big questions of Jeremiah's times

THE DOCTRINAL PROBLEMS

- Zion, the place where God chose to dwell
- the Promise to David — a dynasty "for ever"
- Jerusalem would never be destroyed

Could these teachings be trusted?



A bulla of Baruch ben Neriah. The fingerprint (not noticeable in the photograph) is located in the highlighted area.

The Assassination of Gedaliah & Bullae/Seals in one Bible text

Jeremiah 40:8-41:2

Gedaliah, Ismael, Ephai, Jaazaniah, Baalis, Malcom

587 BC

"So they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah along with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah,

and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite and Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite."

and Johanan the son of Kareah said, "Are you aware that Baalis king of Ammon has

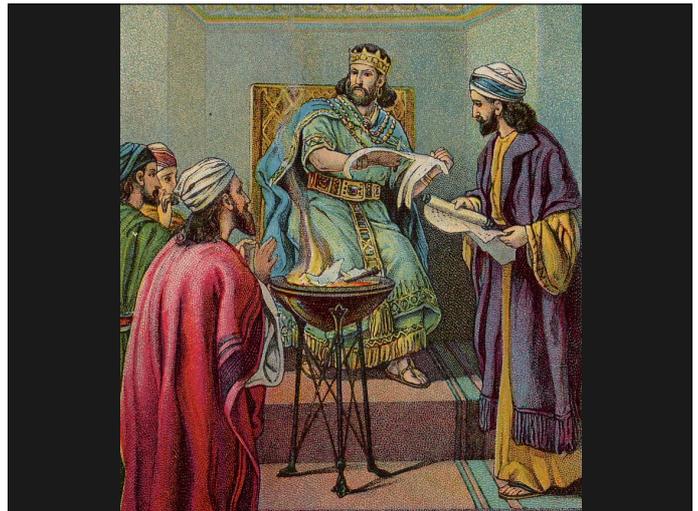
sent Ishmael to take your life? But Gedaliah did not believe them.

Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal family and one of the chief officers [Jaazaniah] of the king

came to Gedaliah at Mizpah and Ishmael with ten men killed Gedaliah."

Jeremiah 40:8-41:2

www.bible.ca/Bulla



Jeremiah & Ezekiel

Jeremiah Dates

Josiah 640-609
Jehoiachaz 609
Jehoiakim 609-597
Jehoiachin 597
Zedekiah 597-587
Gedaliah 587

Ezekiel Dates

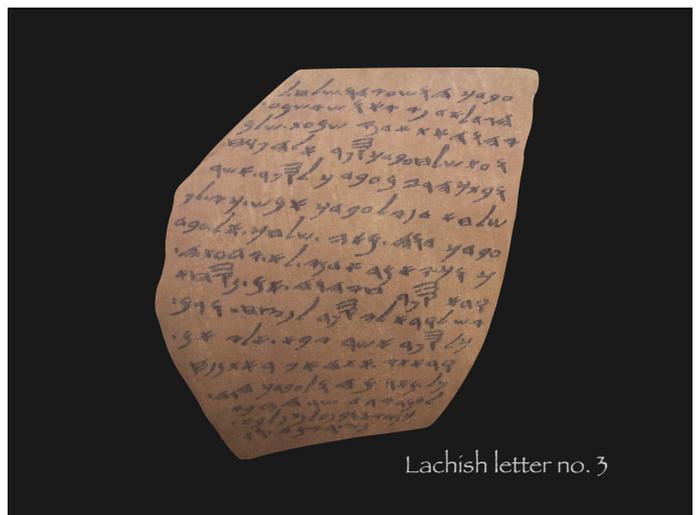
1:1-3:15 Monday 31 Aug 593
 3:16-6:11 Sunday 6 Aug 593
 7:1-9:10 Monday 17 Sept 592
 10:1-11:32 Wednesday 16 Aug 591
 12:1-14:11 Thursday 17 Sept 591
 15:1-16:12 Saturday 29 Sept 587
 17:1-19:10 Wednesday 21 June 587
 20:1-24:18 Monday 18 Sept 587
 25:1-32:16 Thursday 19 March 586
 33:1-40:13 Thursday 29 March 586
 40:14 - October 5 574
 40:14-48:31 October 5, 574
 49:1-50:19 Tuesday 26 April 571

Josiah Family Tree

609 Neco II 610-595 (Egypt) King, death in battle of Carchemish in Medias in 609 2 Chr 35:20-27
 Jehoiachaz (deposed by Neco II in 609 BC)

Jeremiah & Ezekiel

609 Neco II 610-595 (Egypt) King, death in battle of Carchemish in Medias in 609 2 Chr 35:20-27
 Jehoiachaz (deposed by Neco II in 609 BC)





THE DOCTRINAL PROBLEMS

Jeremiah and Ezekiel did more than all others to **save Israel from extinction**. By demolishing false hope, by announcing the calamity as Yahweh's sovereign and righteous judgement, they gave the tragedy explanation in advance in terms of faith, and thereby prevented it from destroying faith.

— John Bright, *A History of Israel*

THE DOCTRINAL PROBLEMS

“you will reach Babylon and there you shall be saved”

— Micah 4:10-13

The faith of Jeremiah's opponents

This theology ... centered in the affirmation of Yahweh's choice of Zion as his seat, and his immutable promises to the Davidic dynasty of an eternal rule and victory over its foes. ... was thrown into crisis by the Assyrian invasions ... Isaiah, by ... stressing the possibility of divine chastisement inherent in it, had reinterpreted it and enabled it to survive. ...

But his assurance to Hezekiah that Jerusalem would not be taken, so dramatically vindicated, plus the collapse of Assyria ... conspired to establish the inviolability of Temple, city, and nation ... as indisputable dogma. ...

It is entirely likely that Jeremiah's bitterest opponents were small-minded disciples of Isaiah not half up to their master's stature!

— John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 1972 p.331

The faith of Jeremiah's opponents

This theology ... centered in the affirmation of Yahweh's **choice of Zion** as his seat, and his immutable **promises to the Davidic dynasty** of an eternal rule and victory over its foes. ... it was thrown into crisis by the Assyrian invasions ... Isaiah, by ... stressing the possibility of divine chastisement inherent in it, had reinterpreted it and enabled it to survive. ...

But his assurance to Hezekiah that **Jerusalem would not be taken**, so dramatically vindicated, plus the collapse of Assyria ... conspired to establish the inviolability of Temple, city, and nation ... as indisputable dogma. ...

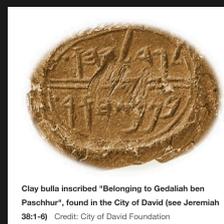
It is entirely likely that Jeremiah's bitterest opponents were **small-minded disciples of Isaiah** not half up to their master's stature!

— John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 1972 p.331

¹ Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jucal son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malchiah heard what Jeremiah was saying to all the people: ² “Thus said the LORD: Whoever remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but whoever surrenders to the Chaldeans shall live; he shall at least gain his life and shall live.

³ Thus said the LORD: This city shall be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon's army, and he shall capture it.”

⁴ Then the officials said to the king, “Let that man be put to death, for he disheartens the soldiers, and all the people who are left in this city, by speaking such things to them. That



Clay bulla inscribed "Belonging to Gedaliah ben Pashhur", found in the City of David (see Jeremiah 38:1-6) Credit: City of David Foundation

Jeremiah's message

³ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with you in this place. ⁴ Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD."

⁵ For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, ⁶ if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, ⁷ then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.

— Jeremiah 7:3-7 (NRSV)

Jeremiah's message—Zion is conditional!

³ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and **let me dwell with you in this place.** ⁴ Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD."

⁵ For **if** you truly amend your ways and your doings, **if** you truly act justly one with another, ⁶ **if** you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and **if** you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, ⁷ **then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.**

— Jeremiah 7:3-7 (NRSV)

Jeremiah's message—don't be so sure!

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD of hosts: Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you; they are deluding you. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. ¹⁷ They keep saying to those who despise the word of the LORD, "**It shall be well with you**"; and to all who stubbornly follow their own stubborn hearts, they say, "**No calamity shall come upon you.**" . . .

³³ When this people, or a prophet, or a priest asks you, "**What is the burden of the LORD?**" you shall say to them, "**You are the burden, and I will cast you off, says the LORD.**"

— Jeremiah 23:16-17,33 (NRSV)

Jeremiah's message—don't be so sure!

⁴ You shall say to them: Thus says the LORD: **If** you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you, ⁵ and to heed the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently—though you have not heeded— ⁶ **then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth.**

— Jeremiah 26:4-6 (NRSV)

Jeremiah's message—protection *in exile!*

⁴ Then the word of the LORD came to me: ⁵ Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles from Judah, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans. ⁶ I will set my eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up, and not tear them down; I will plant them, and not pluck them up. ⁷ I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD; and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.

— Jeremiah 24:4-7 (NRSV)

Jeremiah's message—protection *in exile!*

⁴ Then the word of the LORD came to me: ⁵ Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so **I will regard as good the exiles from Judah, whom I have sent away** from this place to the land of the Chaldeans. ⁶ I will set my eyes upon them for good, and **I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up,** and not tear them down; **I will plant them,** and not pluck them up. ⁷ **I will give them a heart** to know that I am the LORD; and **they shall be my people and I will be their God,** for they shall return to me with their whole heart.

— Jeremiah 24:4-7 (NRSV)

The great contribution of the prophets was their emphasis on God's desire for morality as expressed in the ancient covenant. The **great contribution of Jeremiah** was his insistence on God's everlasting covenant with his people, even outside the land of Israel and despite the loss of national religious symbols — the temple, the Holy City, the Davidic king. And this insistence that the faithful person's relationship with God wasn't broken, even in an idolatrous land, when added to Jeremiah's notion of a new covenant, provided the exiles with the ideas that would transform the nation of Israel into the religion of Judaism.

— Christine Hayes, Open Yale course RLST-145,
Introduction to the Old Testament Lecture 18

