

LIFE OF JEREMIAH—HANDOUT #1

Kings of Judah During the Time of Jeremiah

Josiah (640-609 B.C.)

Jehoahaz/Shallum (3 months, 609 B.C.)

Jehoiakim (609-597 B.C.)

Jehoiachin/Coniah/Jeconiah (3 months, 597 B.C.)

Zedekiah/Mattaniah (597-586 B.C.)

Superscription: (Jeremiah 1:1-4)

Patterns of Symmetry

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

What do you observe about the structure of vv. 1-4?

Broader Paradigm

דְּבַרְיִי יְרֵמְיָהוּ (‘‘words of Jeremiah’’)

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Observation (compare vv. 2-3)

Macrostructure (Jeremiah 1-52)

1:1—
1:3—
51:64—
52—

v. 2— “thirteenth year” ? _____ (date)

Some scholars suggest this is the date of Jeremiah’s birth. Comment.

v. 3— “fifth month”

The final siege of Jerusalem began in January 587 B.C. It ended in the 4th month (June-July) 586 B.C. Systematic deportation and destruction began in July-August 586 B.C. (_____).

Anathoth/Anata (Map)

Benjamin (Map)

?priests there?

Archaeology

Bullae Discoveries

1982—at Jerusalem in the 586 B.C. destruction layer: “Gemaryahu [Gemariah] son of Shaphan” (Jer. 36:10, 11, 12, 25)

2005—at Jerusalem: “belonging to Yehucal [Jehucal/Jucal] ben/son of Shelemiyahu [Shelemiah] ben/son of Shovi” (Jer. 37:3; 38:1)

2008—at Jerusalem: “Gedalyahu [Gedaliah] ben/son of Pashhur” (Jer. 38:1)

Commentaries

Holladay (1986, 1989)—tedious, (form)critical; book is rooted in historical events

Carroll (1986)—radical critical, virtually none of the book is historical

McKane (1986, 1989)—critical, most of the poetry comes from historical Jeremiah. Most prose is rolling redaction/fabrication.

Lundbom (1999, 2004)—massive critical standard. Book is from historical Jeremiah, but admits to some post-Exilic reconstruction.

Thompson (1980)—conservative standard, though now dated. Good work.

Harrison (1973/2009)—conservative; brief; for laypersons

Narrative Study

Elena di Pedè—superb penetration of life and times of Jeremiah. Breaking new ground in Jeremiah studies. Most of her work in French, but worth the effort to translate. Most important: *De Jérusalem à l'Égypte ou le refus de l'Alliance (Jr 32-45)* [“From Jerusalem to Egypt or the Rejection of the Covenant (Jer. 32-45)”] (2006); *Au-delà du refus: l'espoir—Recherches sur la cohérence narrative de Jr 32-45 (TM)* [“Beyond the Rejection: Hope—Research on the Narrative Coherence of Jer. 32-45 (Masoretic Text)”] (2005); numerous journal articles.

Narrative Analysis (J. T. Dennison, Jr.)

Plot of the Book of Jeremiah

Scene → Judah/Jerusalem

Scene Shifts → Egypt, Babylon, Carchemish (Aram/Syria)

Setting → ANE (Ancient Near East) 627/26-587/86 B.C.

Characterization:

Jeremiah	Baruch	Ebed-Melek	Uriah
Josiah	Jehoahaz/Shallum	Jehoiakim	Jehoiachin
Zedekiah	Nebuchadnezzar	Nebuzaradan	Pashhur
Hananiah	Necho II	Hophra	Gedaliah
Ahikam	Shaphan		
God	Future Eschatological Figure		

Plot Conflict

Rising Sequence → Clash of Judah with God → Sin, Idolatry
Clash of Judah with Nations → Wages of Sin

Climax → Sieges of Jerusalem (Narrative Ripples)

Falling Sequence → Razing of Jerusalem (586 B.C.)

Conclusion → Judah in Babylon

Jeremiah in Egypt

?Future → Eschatological vector: horizontal and vertical
(Redemptive-historical interface of protological/eschatological narrative elements → Christ Jesus and the New Israel/Church.
The prophet drawn into the mystery of the fullness of time)