

An Extraordinary Promise - The Prophet Jeremiah:

16

(0:23 - 2:04)

Good morning and Shabbat Shalom. Welcome to United Israel World Union. This is our Sabbath morning scripture study coming to you live from St. Francisville, Louisiana.

Very pleased to be with you today. Thank you very much for joining us. I have a couple of announcements.

Once again, I want to remind you about our United Israel World Union conference. This will be our 80th meeting and conference held in Charlotte, North Carolina at the Doubletree by Hilton South Park. You can read all about it on our web page, UIW.org, UIW.com, and you'll look at the Top and Seat Conference.

You click that, you can read all about the conference. You can see the schedule, the program, the speakers, and I hope that you come. There is no charge, but I do ask that you register.

What that does is it allows us to know who's coming, it prepares us to prepare for you, so we can make name tags and all of that organizational logistical stuff, so please register now sooner rather than later. And I also want to point out that we have reserved a block of rooms at the Doubletree South Park in Charlotte, and you can get one of those rooms, but that block is only reserved until Monday, so you need to do that this weekend. If you're coming, you know you're coming, go ahead and go online and reserve your room, and we look forward to seeing you.

(2:04 - 17:41)

The other thing that I wanted to remind you about is that Thursday evenings, I live-streamed discussion. We're currently working through material that is similar to what I'll be basing my talk on in Charlotte, a little bit more background, a little, you know, I'm gonna have an hour at Charlotte, but this is every Thursday night. We're talking about text-critical studies of the Hebrew Bible.

If you missed my last one, these are exclusively on my YouTube channel, my personal YouTube channel, [youtube.com slash Ross K. Nichols TV](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRossK.NicholsTV). I talked about the Masorah and the Masoretic text, so you don't want to miss that if you haven't listened to it already. Check it out, there are graphics as I speak, and so I hope that you'll check that out.

One final thing, if you've wanted to go on a Holy Land tour, Jonah and I are planning our, well, we've already planned it, actually. The itinerary will be posted this week for the ultimate Tanakh tour, Egypt, Jordan, and Israel. You can choose different packages, you could go Egypt, Jordan, and then fly home, or you can do Israel only and fly home, or you can do all three with me, so check that out, tanakhtours.com. Are we ready? We're going to transition now, announcements are over.

Today I'm talking to you about an extraordinary promise. Remember last week we began to work to discern, to discover remnants of what could possibly be the original scroll of

Jeremiah, so I'm going to take this a little bit further. We're looking for clues within the text, and so get ready, but before I start, I want to pull up the seal, if you will, of Baruch ben Neriah, because we're talking about a scroll that he wrote, so you see it on the screen.

We are presently in our ongoing study, *The World and Words of the Prophet Jeremiah*. This is class number 16. We're talking about the original scroll of Jeremiah, and that scroll, as you will recall, was cut up piece by piece by Yehudi and thrown into the fire in the presence of, if not by the hand of, King Jehoiakim in the fourth or fifth year of his reign.

We know when this took place, and so I want to pick up where we left off last week, and I also want to say that last week we had video streaming problems, and so all that is left of, other than a piecemeal video, is the audio, but I would highly recommend that you check that out. It's on our website, it's on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, just anywhere you get your podcasts. So check out the class that I did last week.

We talked about this offensive action of Yehudi and King Jehoiakim and how they burned the scroll on a wintry day, we know when, in 604 BCE. So we're going to pick up where we left off. Go with me this morning to the book of Jeremiah chapter 36, Jeremiah chapter 36, and I want to begin in verse 1. Jeremiah 36 and verse 1. And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, that this word came unto Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, as the English puts it, and write thereon all the words that I have spoken unto thee, against Israel, or you could say concerning, it's all Israel, concerning Judah and concerning all the nations, from the day that I spoke unto you, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day.

It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I proposed to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of Jehovah which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book, *Al-Megilat Sefer*, upon a rolled account. All right, now what we get from this four-verse record, what we get from this is actually a pretty good bit.

We know from reading this when it was written. It was written in 605 BCE, which corresponds to the fourth year of Jehoiakim. We know the period that was covered within the columns of this ancient scroll, namely 23 years worth of prophetic messages from Jehovah to Jeremiah, 23 years from the 13th year of Josiah until the fourth year of Jehoiakim.

Everything that God had told him is covered for that 23 year period. And we get a few clues of the actual contents of that scroll. We know that within the scroll there were words from Jehovah to Jeremiah concerning Israel and concerning Judah and concerning the nations.

Now last week I proposed, and I am repeating this this week because it was one of the most essential points of my class last week, which we had problems technology-wise, so I wanted to repeat this one thing that I think is very important. Last week I proposed that this original scroll of Jeremiah contained a threat. It contained a threat of impending destruction to the house of Judah, and I want to firmly establish that again with you this morning.

So look at Jeremiah chapter 36 and verse 27. 36 verse 27, and it says, actually I'm going to read 27 through 29. Then the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah saying, take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll which Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, has burned.

And concerning Jehoiakim, king of Judah, you shall say this. So he tells him, you're gonna make another roll, but I want you to specifically tell Jehoiakim this. This is God speaking according to the account that I'm reading to Jeremiah, say this, and here's what he says.

Thus says Jehovah, you have burned this roll, saying, why hast thou written therein, saying, the king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast. So the point is, God says, look, tell him, because he, king Jehoiakim, has said, burn that scroll, how dare you write that Babylon is going to come, destroy this land, leave in it neither man nor beast. Now that's pretty specific.

It makes me believe that at least according to this account, the text is telling us that within that scroll, Jehoiakim, what angered him so much, which caused him to burn the scroll, was the fact that this threat was part of the scroll itself. Now, again, this seems pretty specific. I propose that based on this witness, that this threat must have been worded similarly to Jeremiah 36 29.

Now what is interesting is that, remember, they're told, now he burned that scroll, you're going to write another one with the same words in it as was in the scroll that he burned. So I looked last week to try to find those words, to find that threat, looking for key language which matches the reason that Jehoiakim burned the scroll, and unfortunately that passage that so infuriated Jehoiakim, it is no longer in Jeremiah. Now I've discussed all the details about the possibilities as to why it's not last week, but nonetheless this is an important piece, because I believe that this gives us a piece of evidence of something which was in the original Jeremiah scroll, that we only have a record of it being in the first scroll, it's no longer there, it's only referenced in 36 verse 29.

So we know that the scroll, the original scroll, was burned, look at 36 32, then took Jeremiah, another role, and gave it to Baruch, the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim, king of Judah, had burned in the fire, and there were added besides unto them many more words. Now, again, our present book of Jeremiah, at least according to the Masoretic text, no longer contains the words of the threat which so infuriated Jehoiakim, but we do need to look in other sources which I intend to do, such as the Septuagint, to see if perhaps it's there. Are there any remaining fragments at Qumran which might contain that particular passage? That search is still on, but thus far I've been unable to find it.

But I want to go back now to chapter 36 and verse 3 because I'm on the hunt for any clues of what else may have been in that original scroll. Now, years ago, when I first fell in love with the book of Jeremiah, my understanding of that book was that it accurately reflected everything. First of all, I thought it might be in an order, I had no reason to think that it wouldn't be, but I also kind of felt like, yeah, I knew it was destroyed and that it was

rewritten again, so I felt like, well, it contains everything that the other one contained, and more.

But that particular test that I went through last week proves that some of it is no longer part of our text. So look at verse 3, 36-3. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

All right. Now the question becomes, does this give us any indication as to the contents of that original scroll? Because what I want to express is that the hope expressed in this word, in verse 3, from a word of the Lord to Jeremiah, he says, Ulai, perhaps the house of Judah will hear the words of this scroll and they'll repent. Ulai, perhaps, perhaps when this scroll is read.

So one must wonder, is there anything that this text tells us that stands out specifically as to what that scroll may have contained? Now, you might say, well, no, you don't need it to be specific because in a general way he tells us perhaps they'll repent when they hear all the bad that's coming their way. Now, if they do repent, this is important, had the people of the house of Judah repented when the scroll of Jeremiah was read by Baruch, God says that he would have forgiven or pardoned their iniquity and their sin. Now the Hebrew word for pardon, forgive, is slach.

Samech, lamed, chet, slach. Now this particular word is a fascinating study. It contains the seedbed for an extraordinary promise, that God will forgive or pardon iniquity and sin.

(17:42 - 54:40)

Now this particular word, slach, occurs in various forms, 49 times, 7 times 7, in the Tanakh. It's an incredible word. Now this is not to be confused with nesah.

Now I've heard people say, well-meaning people say that there is no word for forgiveness in the Bible per se, that it, in other words, they'll tell you that the Hebrew word that's usually translated as forgive is a word that literally means to carry, to lift, to hoist, you know, like you're gonna lift a burden, you're gonna hoist something off of someone, and while that word is used, nun shin aleph, or nun sin aleph, that word is used quite a bit and it is often translated as forgive. But this word that I'm talking about, slach, which occurs 49 times in the Hebrew Bible, is not that word. It doesn't mean to lift, to carry, to forgive, pardon.

It means to pardon and forgive, to dismiss. This word is what I want to focus on first thing this morning. The word slach appears in the Pentateuch 20 times.

20 times slach, which means to forgive or pardon, occurs in the five books, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. But get this, it is only used once with two other important words. Only once does the word slach, which means forgive or pardon, only once does that word appear with the Hebrew words for iniquity and sin, avon and katat.

So you want to read that? Let's go. Exodus chapter 34 and verse 9. And by the way, when I was talking about this word nasah that is sometimes translated to forgive, that word does appear in Exodus chapter 34 as well, Exodus 34 7. But the only passage which has slach, avon, and katat in the same verse is Exodus 34 9. And he said, if now I have found favor in

thy sight, O Lord, let the Lord, I pray thee, go in the midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance. The speaker is Moses.

And Moses is requesting, as is indicated by the text, that God forgive, pardon. Now notice he says our. In other words, despite the fact that this people is hard of neck, they're obstinate, they're stiff-necked, he said despite that, please Lord, Adonai, come in our presence and forgive our iniquity and our sin.

First common plural, iniquity and sin, our, our, please forgive. Now of all 49 references in the Tanakh to use the word slach, it's only occurrence outside of Jeremiah to combine forgive, iniquity, and sin. So I want to let that sink in for just a moment.

Moses makes a request according to Exodus 34 verse 9 that God would be part of them, come in their midst, forgive their iniquity and their sin, and all through the Bible, 49 occurrences, the only other passage, the only other passage that ties forgiveness with both iniquity and sin is in Jeremiah. So, nowhere else, 929 chapters, 929 chapters, and it occurs nowhere else. Okay, now in chapter 36 of Jeremiah, God makes it very clear that had the house of Judah, or if the house of Judah, would only repent when they hear the words of this scroll, he says that he will do this thing, this extraordinary promise, he'll forgive their iniquity and their sin.

So I was curious, is there any other passage, because I was doing searches, so I wanted, first of all, I looked at every occurrence of the Hebrew word slach, and all around it I looked for the words avon and kathat, iniquity or guilt and sin, and I didn't find that combination. So then I said, well, I would have thought that the combination iniquity and sin probably is all over the place. I want to find that phrase as used in Jeremiah 36, iniquity and sin, and I looked for it in the Hebrew, because I'm looking for a certain form of each of those words because of the way my mind thinks, and I found one other passage in all the Bible where that phrase that's found in Jeremiah 36, the extraordinary promise, I will forgive, I will pardon their iniquity and their sin.

It only occurs in one other passage, and it's in Jeremiah as well. But this one is in Jeremiah 31, so go with me to Jeremiah 31, and I'm only at this time interested in the last part of verse 34. So you would say 31, chapter 31, verse 34b, and here's what it says, for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin.

Now, not only does this use the same words, but it uses the exact same formulation as is found in Jeremiah chapter 36, when God tells Moses, God tells Jeremiah, the prophet like Moses, God tells Jeremiah, write this scroll, and perhaps when the children in the house of Judah hear the words of this scroll, they'll repent, and I will pardon their iniquity and their sin. So I find it interesting that of all of the texts of the Bible, it only occurs precisely in the same way here in Jeremiah 31. Now, who knows what Jeremiah 31 predicts? A new covenant.

I'm not going to go too far into this right now, but Jeremiah 31, 31 through 34. Behold, days are coming, saith the Lord, when I'll make a new covenant with the house of Israel, with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers when I brought them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they broke, though I was

a husband of them, but this is the covenant that I will make with them in those days. And then he gives an extraordinary promise.

I will forgive their iniquity and their sin. So I thought, this is interesting, because this one pericope, this one section of text concerns Israel, it concerns Judah, and it contains a language, the phrase that is used when a scroll is written in Jeremiah 36. Remember, the order is not, you can't trust the order in Jeremiah.

Okay, I think this is rather extraordinary. In both of these cases, in Jeremiah 31, verse 34b, and Jeremiah 36, verse 3, we have a record, according to the author, according to the scribe, of a report of a promise from the Lord to and through Jeremiah in the first person. I will forgive their iniquity and their sin.

Now, if you think back to what we read in Exodus 34 9, Moses' request, it's Moses speaking, and he says, according to Exodus 34 9, he wants God to come in their midst, and he asked God further to forgive our iniquity and our sin. And then all the way, let's say that's 14, 1500 BCE, then all the way up to 604 BCE, now we see it again for the first time in all of biblical history. We have Jehovah, not once, but twice, in the first person, saying, I will pardon their iniquity and their sin.

So now, I became curious. These two passages have God in the first person saying, I will forgive or pardon. And previously, now by the way, again, this is not lift, carry, this is not the word *nassah*, this is *selah*, right? You got to get the distinction, because there are a lot of people, I read commentaries in books and academic articles, and they say, well technically in the Hebrew word, or in the Hebrew language, the word for forgive is really to lift, and they really get hung up on that, and they need to know a little bit more about the Hebrew and say that a lot of the passages that are translated, that's indeed true, but there is this other word.

So I got curious about this other word, and I said, okay, if *selah* occurs 49 times, how many, and I'd already been through them, I'd already gone through every one of them, so late at night I said, how many of those are used from the mouth of God? In other words, the word could have other, someone else could say, like Moses says, forgive, he uses the word. Other people might say, pardon this, please, I beseech thee. But I wanted to know how many times does God say, I'll forgive.

I know he only says, I'll forgive their iniquity and their sin, he only says that once, but where else does God say I will forgive? Okay, so perhaps I could just, I thought, perhaps I could just open up my parameters a bit, and not be so particular, and just look at every one of these and find where God said that. Now, I did that, and I would have thought that God said, I will forgive in many places, in many books, because this is one of the things that a lot of people associate with the goodness of God, is that he is a forgiving God. Now, a lot of those people are basing that off text like Exodus 34 7, which is, and that uses *nasah* to lift, I will lift transgression, etc.

By the way, it's not the same phrase, though, transgression and sin, or iniquity and sin, but that particular phrase, Exodus 34 7, is repeated in all or in part like 14 times in the Hebrew Bible, because it's a self-description of God. So people associate the forgiving nature of God, and you would think it was everywhere, like God would just all the time say, I would forgive,

I will forgive, I will forgive. So, I thought about it, and I searched, there are 24 books in the Hebrew Bible, there are 929 chapters, and I was expecting to find it distributed throughout the entirety of the Bible.

I thought I would find a good portion of it in the Pentateuch, but God never says in the Pentateuch he would forgive using Salah. Moses asked him to, but he doesn't say, yes, I will forgive. It's nowhere in the Pentateuch, and then I decided if I checked the prophets, the historical books, I would find it all over the place, and then I would check the writings, you know, Psalms and Proverbs, and worked my way all the way through Chronicles.

It appears nowhere in the writings where God says, I will forgive. It only occurs in one book. It's written by, according to what we believe, Jeremiah.

So only in Jeremiah is the word Salah coming from God saying, I will forgive, and I'm talking about a different verse than we've already discovered. Jeremiah 36 3 has it, Jeremiah 31 34 B has it, but there are also six passages total in the Hebrew Bible where God says, I will forgive. Six passages, all of which, and by the way, they're all in the first person, and they're all in one book, and that one book is Jeremiah.

Only in Jeremiah. So you don't need to flip back and forth and, you know, wear yourself out and go from book to book to book to book. It's all right there, and we're gonna work through those.

If you're taking notes, you can do this very easily. These are first-person God saying, I forgive, or I will forgive. You can have one book at the top, you write Jeremiah, and then you write these verses, and then we're gonna go through them.

Jeremiah chapter 5 verse 1, Jeremiah chapter 5 verse 7, Jeremiah 31 34 B, which we already read, Jeremiah 33 8, and Jeremiah chapter 50 and verse 20. So go with me to Jeremiah chapter 5, Jeremiah chapter 5. These are the six references to God saying, I will forgive. Jeremiah chapter 5 verse 1. You'll see the way I pulled this out using the Hebrew.

Run ye, plural, y'all run, to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man, if there be any that doeth justly, that seeketh truth, and I will pardon her. There it is, and I will forgive. So the message from God is, if you, this group, y'all listen, if you run through the streets of Jerusalem, and you can find one man, this is interesting, by the way, if you can find a man doing justice and righteousness, and in the Hebrew it's oseh mishpat, mabakesh imunah.

If you can find one man there who is doing mishpat, or justice, who is seeking faithfulness, or truth, as some might say it, then he says, I will forgive her. Get this, God is saying, I will forgive Jerusalem. Look at the context.

If you just find one, reminds us of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, doesn't it? Where Abraham bargains with God. What if we find 50? What if we find, what if we find 10? How about, you know, and God says, if you do, I'll forgive. It's a different word there, by the way, but anyway, you get the point.

Look at verse 7, chapter 5, Jeremiah 5 and verse 7. Now in this one, he uses the phrase, I pardon, but it's in a question. He says, how can I pardon? Your children have forsaken me and sworn by them that are no gods. When I'd fed them to the fool, they committed adultery and assembled themselves in troops and whorehouses.

This is pretty strong language, but he says, how could I pardon you when you've done these things? So what we learn is that doing justice and seeking after faithfulness, it provides a possibility that God could pardon an entire place, if one person. But in this verse, we find that forsaking God and swearing to no gods can yield not just the opposite, but literally prevent the possibility of forgiveness. Now I said something like this once before in a class, and I got more people commenting, you know, it's the old, you can't say that God can't forgive.

The point being that repentance leads to God granting pardon. Like, if you're not sorry, I'm sorry to tell you, that doesn't yield God's forgiveness. You know, somebody might say, well God can do anything, it's the old, can God create a rock so big that God can't pick it up? And the answer to that is no, it's a philosophical point, it's not a biblical point.

I go with biblical points. We can do philosophy another day. But tonight, today, let's stick with the text.

What God requires to achieve, to receive his pardon, his forgiveness, is that a person would repent. Now, we read 31-34b already, where God says, and I will pardon their iniquity and their sin. I do want to bring up that if you read that passage in context, the New Covenant passage, Behold, days are coming, saith the Lord, Jeremiah 31, 31 through 34.

If you read that in context, you'll find that it says that once they are pardoned, they'll know God. Now, how do I get that? Because it says they will all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, etc., because I pardon their iniquity and their sin. In other words, once the pardon takes place, it opens up this idea that the knowledge of God, as other prophets put it, will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Once the pardon comes. Now, look at Jeremiah chapter 33 and verse 8. I just find it interesting that only the book of Jeremiah has God saying in the first person that he will say, I forgive. 33, 8. In fact, let me go back to verse 4. I want to give you the context here.

I want to read between white spaces, from white space to white space. Jeremiah 33, verse 4. Ki ko mar Yehovah, let's see, for thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which are broken down to make a defense against the mounds and against the sword, while men come to fight with the Chaldeans and to fill them with the dead bodies of men whom I've slain in my anger and in my wrath, and for all whose wickedness I've hid my face from this city. Behold, it will bring, I will bring health and cure, I'll cure them, and I'll reveal unto them abundance of peace and truth, and I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them as at the first, and I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me, and I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned against me, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

And this city shall be to me for a name of joy, for a praise, and for a glory before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and for all the peace that I procure unto it." Marvelous, wonderful passage. And notice he's going to cleanse them, it says in verse 8, from all their iniquity, whereby they've sinned against me, and I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they've sinned against me and transgressed against me. Now notice in the Hebrew, iniquity there is avon, sin is hatat, so again we have forgive, sin, iniquity, and sin, avon and hatat.

Jeremiah, the message that Jeremiah gives is consistent. God will forgive iniquity and sin, and no one else talked about it. Moses asked that God would do it.

No one else talks about that. Now, there are different forms of the word that Jeremiah used, but those are grammatical points. My point is, God forgiving, iniquity and sin, they go together in Jeremiah.

Now look with me, go back with me to, well we don't have to read it again, Jeremiah 36 3, where we begin, is where God says when they hear the words of the perhaps they will repent, shuv, they'll return, and then I will pardon iniquity and sin. Now look with me at Jeremiah 50, Jeremiah 50 and verse 17. Now again, I want to include, I'm really getting to verse 20, but I want to read white space to white space, I want to read this this particular passage in context, if you will allow.

Jeremiah 50 verse 17 at the white space begins like this, Israel is a hunted or scattered sheep. Israel is a scattered sheep. The lions have driven him away.

First the king of Assyria devoured him, and now at last Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, hath broken his bones. Therefore thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, behold I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. Stop.

He already punished the king. Remember, we're looking at context too. When this is written, the king of Assyria has already been punished.

Who punished the king of Assyria? Remember, Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar in the battle at Carchemish. Okay.

And I will bring Israel again to his pasture, and he will feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead. In those days and in that time saith Jehovah, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none. And the sins of Judah, they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant.

Okay. Verse 20, one more time, a little bit more literally. In those days and at that time, the iniquity of Von and the guilt, the iniquity and the sin of Judah will not be found.

Why? Why will it? It's a very interesting passage here. It says that in those days and at that time, it's going to be sought for, like people will look for it. They'll say, where are all those sins and those iniquities of Israel and Judah? It's like you're looking for them, you're really looking.

Do people look for the sins of Israel today? Yeah, yeah. How about log on and watch the UN or somebody? Yeah, of course they do. But you're gonna look, and they're not gonna be found.

The question is why? Why are they not gonna be found? Because. Key. Key.

Because I will pardon them who remain. So God's going to pardon the iniquity and the sin such that you can't find it. Is there a psalm that says that he will cast sins as far as east is from the west? Do we not have passages that talk about sins being cast into the depths of the sea? Now this passage, this passage, chapter 50 verse 20, is contained in a section of oracles or burdens concerning the nations, right? Specifically Babylon, and it seems to run for two consecutive chapters.

If you begin in chapter 50 and you read all the way through 50, all the way through 51, both of these chapters deal with the burden or the prophetic oracles against or concerning Babylon. This falls right in the middle of that. What I find interesting is this, in verse 17 where it says, Israel is a scattered sheep.

See one of the most important things, and Jeremiah knows this, unfortunately a lot of Bible students don't, is Jeremiah is very consistent to distinguish between Israel and Judah. We're gonna do a whole class on this, what Jeremiah said about the lost tribes. So, but this is a snippet of that.

I want you to get this today, because in Jeremiah 50 17, Israel is a scattered sheep. Now I want you to look down, look back at chapter 50. Again, this too is part of the oracle dealing with Babylon, but let's look at verse 4. Jeremiah 50 verse 4, this is one of the most beautiful poetic passages about the redemption of Israel, the good.

Remember Jeremiah's got a bad job in some ways. He's gonna see the overthrow, the tearing down, the breaking this and that, but he's also gonna see a building and a planting or predict one. Here's what he says in 50 verse 4, in those days and at that time, but yamim hachemah uva'et hahi, saith Jehovah, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, notice the two groups, they shall go on their way weeping and they shall seek Jehovah their God.

They shall inquire concerning Zion with their faces turned toward it, saying, Come ye and join yourselves to Jehovah in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten. Now notice this is referring to a new covenant, a different covenant. We'll get into that, but I want you to recognize the power in the way this is worded.

They will, the children of Israel and Judah are coming together weeping and look, their faces are towards Zion and they're asking, they're walking this way and they're going, excuse me, do you know the way to Zion? And they say, you're going in the right way, your faces are turned toward. It's as if they're drawn, they're being pulled by the God of all creation to Zion, they're coming, they're weeping and they're on the right path, but they're making their way. Now look, look at verse 6. My people have been lost sheep, their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they've turned them away on the mountains, they've gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place.

All that found them have devoured them and their adversary said, we're not guilty because they've sinned against Jehovah. Notice this is what we're talking about, those sins. See, the people still hold their sins against them, the people do.

The habitation of righteousness, even Jehovah, the hope of their fathers. But what they don't know is that as these people of Judah and Israel are coming back, weeping, faces turned toward the Zion, their sins and their iniquities have been pardoned. Other people are saying they've sinned against God, but their sins are already, as far as east is from west at this point, lost scattered sheep.

The scatterers are Assyria and Babylon. Now in chapter 36, when Jeremiah was told to write a scroll, he was informed by God that if Ulai, perhaps the people of the house of Judah, notice he's very specific, house of Judah, will hear the words, the bad things that I intend to do to them, and they'll repent. So he said make sure that the scroll contains everything that I've spoken to you from the time that I first spoke to you in the time of Josiah, the 13th year, up until, because it's going to concern Israel, all Israel, all Judah, and all the nations.

And there's something about this, the words of this scroll, Jeremiah, that will cause them to repent, and then I will forgive them, I'll pardon them. So I wondered, could Jeremiah 36 verse 3, and its use of a phrase that is found very specifically in that form only in Jeremiah 31, 34b, in the New Covenant passage, could that maybe somehow mean that the New Covenant was part of the original scroll? Now that was a big question. Look, we have 11 passages in Jeremiah, 11 different passages in Jeremiah, where it says that Jeremiah wrote a scroll.

Now there are more things that he wrote, or there are more references to write in Jeremiah, like it talks about someone whose name is written in the dirt. Jeremiah at one point writes out a deed, you know, as Jerusalem is in flames, and this purchase takes place. I'm not talking about that, I'm talking about references to the scroll, or a scroll.

Some of those references refer to, and you'll write another one. But here's what I discovered when I went through all of the text, the 11 passages which mention Jeremiah writing a scroll. Eight of those, eight of those references deal with scroll number one.

(54:41 - 55:17)

Clearly, you can't say otherwise. If you find all eight, in fact that'd be something fun for you to do this afternoon, go find all eight references to writing a scroll in Jeremiah and figure out which scroll it is, scroll one or scroll two, and then see if you come up with the same thing that I do. If you don't, take a break and do it again.

Just joking. Eight of these references are clearly scroll number one. The other three, you know, we have to figure out.

(55:17 - 1:00:59)

Now, one of the three which is up in the air is found in Jeremiah chapter 30. Go with me to Jeremiah 30. So, in other words, I'm saying, I don't know if this is part of scroll one, which was burned and had to be rewritten.

In other words, did Jeremiah 30, was it part of the first scroll? Maybe it was edited later, who knows? But I do know that, well, I can't tell you that, all right, but I do know that it doesn't give me a date. Here's the way it starts. Jeremiah 30 verse 1, the word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah saying, thus speaketh Jehovah the God of Israel saying, write thee all the words that I've spoken unto you in a scroll.

Write thee all the words that I've spoken unto you in a scroll. Now, look, here's the thing. That is almost exactly what it says in verse 36 or chapter 36 verse 1 and 2. Make a scroll.

Jeremiah 36 verse 1 through 4 is the story of make the scroll. That language is very similar. Now, does that mean, well, I don't know, it could be another scroll.

In fact, years ago, and I saw Baruch even posted this class, I taught from the desert a series on the Jeremiah New Covenant scroll, where I proposed that this is a different scroll altogether. Now, we do know that oftentimes the finished product, the redacted book contains various scrolls, if you will, various fragments that made their way into a final edited version. So it doesn't matter, but here's something I want you to consider.

There's something in the language that I think is important that makes me wonder, could this have been part of the original scroll? He says, remember, in 36, if they'll listen, I'll pardon their iniquity and their sin. Chapter 30 begins with the command to write a scroll, and then it goes for chapter 30 is connected, even though there are white space segments, there's setumah and petukah, breaks in the text. I read from chapter 30 verse 1 through the end of 31 as one unit.

Now, either one unit that was part of the original Jeremiah scroll, or one unit which was a separate scroll altogether, but it goes together. So it begins with, Jeremiah, write a scroll. It ends with, towards the very end, it says, I will forgive their iniquity and their sin.

So if you look at 36, which is talking about write the original scroll, it says you're going to have things about Israel and about Judah, and maybe they'll repent when they hear the words, and I'll forgive their... It almost sounds like it's describing at least some of what we find in Jeremiah 30 and 31. The question becomes, could what I have previously called Jeremiah's new covenant scroll, could that be something which in one form or another was part of the original Jeremiah scroll? Could it be? Could it be that the new covenant promise, the extraordinary promise, could it be that that is a response to a request from Moses? Think about it. Moses asked God, forgive our iniquity and our sin.

It's never mentioned again until another prophet, a prophet like Moses, writes in a scroll two first-person accounts where God says, I will forgive their iniquity and their sin. From Moses to a prophet like Moses, a connection exists, a request from the first, and in the scroll of the next, it appears. Well, that's a question, and for the answer to that question, you'll have to join me next Saturday, same time, same channel, Shabbat Shalom, Shavua Tov, and go sign up to be with us in Charlotte.