

Jeremiah of Anathoth - The Prophet Jeremiah: 1

Divrei Yirmiyahu bin Hilkiyahu min hako'anim asher ba'انات ba'aretz bin yamin. The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiyah, of the priest who were in Anatot, in the land of Benjamin. And so begins the Hebrew Bible's book of Jeremiah.

And so begins our journey into a new and informative study on the world and words of the prophet Jeremiah. Good morning. Welcome back, Ross.

Thank you very much. I'm pleased to be here with you today. It's been a long time.

I was in Israel and Jordan, as most of you know, for over 30 days on the ground leading and co-leading three back-to-back tours. And while that was fun and exciting and I enjoyed myself immensely, I can tell you that there is no place like home. I'm glad to be back with you today.

We are beginning a new study series beginning today. Don't ask me how long it's going to be, how many weeks, I have no idea. But we're going to work through the world and words of the prophet Jeremiah.

And at the outset, you should know that I intend to cover this book with all the attention that it deserves. I plan to spend adequate time, more than adequate time, working through this book for a lot of reasons. I'm going to share with you some things from the text that many of you might not observe on your own.

We're going to be recognizing the unsurpassed beauty, the historical importance, and the singular significance to both Judaism and Christianity. Let me just say this, Jeremiah, the book of Jeremiah, I believe and propose to you this morning that unlike any other book, among the prophets in particular, there is nothing that is more of a seedbed, if you will, for the emerging biblical fates post the biblical period. In other words, both Judaism and Christianity draw heavily upon the book of Jeremiah and the words attributed to the prophet Yirmeyahu, as he is called in Hebrew.

Now, you know, if you've listened to me for any period of time, that this is one of my favorite books. And my love for the book will show up throughout this study, I assure you. You will not be able to miss my affection for Jeremiah and the words attributed to him.

It's one of my two favorite books of the Bible. The other, as you know, is Deuteronomy. And throughout this study, I'll show a connectedness, if that's a word, between Deuteronomy and Jeremiah.

I'm going to highlight quite a bit. And at the appropriate places, I will tell you why that connectedness exists. Now, you're going to need everything that we've learned together over the past several studies.

We're going to draw heavily upon the things that we've learned together, particularly when it comes to authorship and those kind of things that we worked on as we worked through the Pentateuch in our year-long study of the five books. So, everything that we've covered in previous studies will be needed in order to appreciate and follow this study in the most

accurate way. We're going to be carefully analyzing the contents of the book of Jeremiah with two main focuses.

The first is the text. We're going to focus heavily on the text of Jeremiah, but we're going to do that in accordance with the context of the book. So, it's not just enough to read the text.

I want to put you inside the text of the prophet Jeremiah. I'm going to put you in the ancient world in which Jeremiah lived. I want you to imagine the scenery around us.

I want the people, the characters, the personalities of this book to come to life in front of your very eyes. We're going to do everything we can to put you back to the seventh century BCE, sixth century BCE, and we're going to work through the story as it unfolds. Now, when it comes to the text, I want to say a couple of things up front.

The Hebrew Masoretic text, our standard biblical text of the Hebrew Bible, is going to be our primary source, but it is not our sole source. Now, what do I mean by that? I'm going to draw on sources other than the Hebrew text of the Masoretic Bible. I'm going to do, I'm going to supplement our study of the Masoretic text with other versions and variant readings such as those found in the Septuagint, the Greek version.

I'm also going to draw on the Dead Sea Scrolls. I'm leaving no stone unturned because it deserves this kind of attention. Now, I should explain a little bit more on the sources and the reason I would look at both the Septuagint as well as the Masoretic text.

It's been long noted and observed that the Hebrew of the Masoretic text of the book of Jeremiah is not the same as the Septuagint Greek version of the same material, the book of Jeremiah. They differ. The Greek, by the way, has approximately one-eighth less material than the Hebrew, for starters.

And then the judgment against the nation, the oracles against the nation, which in the Hebrew Bible goes from chapter 46 through 51, that in the Greek, those oracles against the nations follows Jeremiah 25 verse 13 in the Greek. So, not only is it in a different order, but the arrangement is also different. So, the order of the nations, the oracles of the nations differ in their order and arrangement, their placement in the text, and different nations are spoken of the Hebrew and the Greek.

Now, there is a long, long-standing debate among the academics about which came first. Which came first, the Greek version or the Hebrew version? Now, what we know about the Septuagint is that it is a Greek translation of an earlier Hebrew text. But this is where it gets interesting, all right? One might suppose that the Hebrew of the Masoretic text reflects a closer text to what we would call the earliest or the original version.

But this question, this debate is complicated by Qumran for a couple of reasons. Because in the cache of documents discovered among the Judean desert scrolls, we have some manuscripts of Jeremiah which match more closely the text that we find in the Hebrew Masoretic text. We have other texts which seem to match more closely to the Greek of the Septuagint.

Now, how is that? There is a strong and compelling argument that beneath the Septuagint, the LXX, beneath that Greek text, there is a now missing Hebrew original evidenced by what we call a Hebrew volage that's present in the Septuagint. In other words, when we look at the Hebrew sum of the Hebrew fragments of Jeremiah from Qumran, what we find is that the Hebrew doesn't follow the Masoretic text but seems to go, seems to be a translation of a text very similar to the Greek Septuagint text, indicating that there was an earlier form of Jeremiah written in Hebrew that the translators of the Septuagint used that is different than our Masoretic text. So, we have to look at both.

We have to consider both the Masoretic text in places, we have to consider the Septuagint in those same places, and we're also going to rely on the discoveries from the Judean desert. Now, so I'm going to be, as I research and as I prepare for these classes, I will be looking at the original languages and consulting them as I prepare these classes. Now, as far as the English text, what I'm going to use, I often get correspondence from people, viewers, listeners, who say, hey, what translation are you using? Well, it depends.

There are times where I'm looking at the Hebrew and translating as I go. There are times when I am looking at the Koran text and reading it. Sometimes I use the JPS, the Jewish Publication Society, which I don't like.

It's not so literal, but sometimes I have that because, actually and honestly, it's one of my favorite Bibles. I like the cover on it. But there are times where it really matters, and I want a more literal reading, in which case I would go to the Koran or translate it myself as I go.

The other text that I want to use from time to time, because I actually think it's very, very good, and the translator, whose name is Robert Alter, uses in his translation exactly what I just described. He takes into consideration the Septuagint readings, and at times he'll either bring those out in the translation if it seems to be the more accurate translation or the more original in his thinking. So I will use Alter's translation.

Bottom line, it's going to depend on my intended point, but you can use any translation. There are times where I use the New American Standard. You may like the King James, or some of you may like another Jewish translation or another Christian Bible.

We're going to be okay, because as I need to dive in and draw something out of the text, regardless of your translation, I'll use the appropriate text. If I need to get more literal, I can do that. If it doesn't matter so much, then I may read the JPS.

Now, the order and arrangement of these classes, the material that I'll cover from class to class, also depends on how I feel led to go with the class, and that is developed as I prepare the material. Sometimes I'll follow a chronological order, and at other times I'll prepare a class or classes based on a more topical overview. I'll take perhaps a subject, like let's say I want to teach on Jeremiah's oracles against the nations, in which case I might use our horizontal study method and show you the variations on the order of the nations, etc.

It just depends. Buckle up, my friends, because this is going to be fun. It's going to be informative, and you will see again how much I absolutely love this particular text, or this particular book.

Now, aside from the text of Jeremiah itself, it would be somewhat boring and less instructive if I just began in verse 1 and took it verse by verse by verse by verse. What I intend to do is take a word, a verse, a paragraph, a chapter, a section, and I want to build around it the context, the biblical ancient context, so that I can put you in the story. You're not a casual reader of the words and world of Jeremiah.

You are invited to come with me and travel back in time to a different place in order to fully understand. So, in a sense, what I'll be doing is building a commentary, a running commentary on the life and times of Jeremiah as we work through the book attributed to him, as we proceed through the classes. You're going to get at the end of this, thanks to Baruch, thanks to John Perry in his very good and thorough notes.

You ought to be able to print this out and have a study version of the book of Jeremiah. By the way, Baruch has had a few weeks to relax and rest, and so I'm sure that he will be on this as his time allows. I also want to say as we get ready to jump into this that I see this as the first in a series of deep dives in other books of the Bible.

I want to work through the prophets. I want to work Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Nahum, Micah, the twelve. I want to work through the historical books, Samuel, Kings, the Psalms, the Proverbs, and we will do this as long as God allows.

As my Arabic friends say, Inshallah. I picked up a little bit of Arabic while I was over there. Be'ezrat Hashem, with the help of Hashem.

Now, why would I begin with Jeremiah? Well, first, because I get to pick, and I love Jeremiah, but that's not really the only reason. There's another reason I begin with Jeremiah. Among the major prophets, some of you might say, Why didn't you start with Isaiah? Isaiah, Jeremiah, everyone knows the order.

Ah, but you know the order based on the current arrangement of the text in the Bible, but did you know that according to the Talmud and Baba Batra, it gives the original order or an earlier order of the text in which Jeremiah is the first book among the major prophets. So, Jeremiah is first for a lot of reasons, and this is one of the main ones. Jeremiah is the first book we're going to tackle, and depending on when we finished, I'll tell you where we're going next, but probably the book of Isaiah.

So, just so you know. Now, that might be a year from now, but again, that's what we intend to do. So, let's begin, shall we? Man, I can't tell you how excited I am to be here today.

Again, the book begins, Divrei Yirmiyahu, Words of Jeremiah, or Jeremiah's words, we might say. So, the book begins Divrei Yirmiyahu, and then in Hebrew, there is a marker that indicates, actually, it's after the next phrase, Divrei Yirmiyahu, Ben Hilkiyahu, and under Hilkiyahu, it has what's called an Athnach, which logically divides the verse in half. So, it begins, Words of Jeremiah, Son of Hilkiyah.

Now, interestingly, large sections of this book are presented, get this, as the actual words of Jeremiah. Now, some of you who might be a little more fundamentalist might say, well, all of the words of Jeremiah are Jeremiah's, but you'll see that that's not the case. Again, based on things we've learned, we recognize other hands in these texts.

We recognize the hands of editors or redactors or scribes. In fact, when it comes to Jeremiah, not only do we know a scribe that worked for Jeremiah by the name of Baruch ben Neriah, we also get an indication as to parts of the book that he himself wrote and not Jeremiah. By the way, we're going to get into some archaeological discoveries throughout this course as well.

I call it a course because this isn't your run-of-the-mill Bible study. We're going deep. We're going to take, this is going to be like a very instructive period, week after week, we're going to learn deep diving into this text.

You're going to learn quite a bit. We're going to deal with archaeology, discoveries of bulla or seals from the time which mention characters in or personalities in the book of Jeremiah, and we're going to weigh those. We're going to talk about, are they authentic? Is there an argument that they're forged? You know me, I like tackling some of those questions.

So, but at times we read extensive sections within the material attributed to Jeremiah that's written in the first person, and at other times there is clearly another hand involved in the text. Very clear. There's no need arguing over it.

There's no need in defending a traditional view that is not supported by the evidence. We're going to be honest to Jeremiah, just like we were honest to Moses. We're not going to attribute things to Jeremiah that he didn't write.

In a passage where it says that Baruch wrote something, we're going to take that at face value, weigh the evidence, and we're going to proceed. In a place where Jeremiah says, these are the words that I wrote, we're going to trust that because I am a textual analyst. I depend on the text.

See, traditionalists often defend things that can't be defended according to the text. They're liberal in their views. They do things with the text that should not be done, whereas I want to focus very closely on the text.

So again, much of the book introduces oracles of Jeremiah which seem to be written, or get this, or could be written by Jeremiah's own hand and not that of another. These are those examples where it's written in the first person. So again, we're going to be dealing with authorship.

Now this does not prove, particularly to the skeptics out there, that Jeremiah wrote it. Just because the text is in the first person does not mean that Jeremiah wrote it. But what I'm going to ask you to do is work with me here.

What it does for us in this study is it does get us as close as we can to arriving at that possible conclusion. In other words, when we read where Jeremiah says, and the word of the Lord was to me, we're going to believe that that represents a form of Jeremiah's original oracle. Okay? Now I want to give, I want to propose that we give weight accordingly when we encounter these examples similar to what we learned as we worked through the text of the Pentateuch.

Now here is an example. I want to lay this out very, very well as we enter this study. I want to show you the difference.

You got this in the Pentateuch, but I want to show you the difference in Jeremiah. This is phase one, step one, level one in our journey through the book of Jeremiah. There is a phrase that occurs nine times in the Hebrew.

It says, And the word of Jehovah was to me. All right, we're going to look at each of these nine. Go with me.

Jeremiah chapter one, verse four. Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, and then he gives what it is that the Lord said to him. But he's telling us this.

Jeremiah is, look at verse 11. Verse 11 says, and the word of Jehovah came to me saying, I'm not going to get into what he's saying yet. This is for a later class.

Look at verse 13. And the word of Jehovah came to me a second time. See, this is first person.

Look down at chapter two, verse one. Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, the word of Yehudah bar Yehovah Eli Lamor. Look at chapter, now we're going to skip.

Now I want you to notice how far I'm going to skip. I'm in Jeremiah chapter two. Now I'm going to go to Jeremiah chapter 13.

Verse three. Next time we see the word of the Lord to Jeremiah is here, 13.3. Then the word by Yehudah bar Yehovah Eli a second time saying, the word of the Lord came to me a second time saying. Look down at verse eight.

The word of the Lord came to me saying. Now you have to skip to chapter 16. I want you to write these down or have these in your notes.

You can wait for Baruch to finish his notes. These are going to become important. By Yehudah, 16.1 of Jeremiah, by Yehudah bar Adonai Eli Lamor.

Then the word of the Lord came also to me saying. Now look at chapter 18, Jeremiah 18 and verse five. The word of the Lord came to me saying.

These are all the exact Hebrew phrase. Jeremiah 24.4, 24.4. The word of the Lord came to me saying. Now these ladies and gentlemen are the only passages that begin with this precise Hebrew phrase.

Now exactly what that means will become clearer as we work through. But there are nine references in Jeremiah. Notice that they are in chapter 1 through 25 with gaps between the occurrences.

Now you don't know yet. Maybe some of these go on and on and on for pages. But right now this is all you know.

Jeremiah 1 through 25. Now just so you know, some scholars believe that the first 25 chapters of Jeremiah represent the core of Jeremiah and the more ancient and authentic parts of the book. I'm not suggesting that yet.

I'm not suggesting it that I might suggest it later. You just have to wait. We'll see.

Now other prophets say the same thing Jeremiah says. In fact, that phrase occurs 53 times in the Hebrew Bible, nine of which are Jeremiah. At other times, the phrase Devar Yehovah or the word of Jehovah is used by an author other than the one to whom the word came.

Does that make sense? In the cases I mentioned, the nine examples in Jeremiah 1 through 24.4, it says in the word of Jehovah came to me saying. There are other occurrences of the word of the Lord, but it's not by Jeremiah. It might be someone else telling us the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah.

In fact, that's a good portion of them. Notice that these examples never occur until Jeremiah 29. Follow me.

I know I'm throwing a lot at you, but in Jeremiah chapter 1 through 28, never does it occur. The phrase that I'm about to give you, it only picks up in Jeremiah 29 and following. So go with me.

We're going to go through these two, Jeremiah 29 and verse 30. The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying, I remember the other phrase, the word of the Lord came to me. This is someone else.

Now, some of you are probably typing right now. Well, duh, it's Baruch ben Neriah. Maybe, but listen, Devar Yehovah, and it was, or the word of Jehovah was to Jeremiah saying.

Jeremiah didn't write this. Someone else did, but someone is telling us that what follows is the word of the Lord to Jeremiah. All right, Jeremiah 32, Jeremiah 32 and verse 26.

The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying, by the way, all of these, there are 11 of them. All of these, I want you to have them in your notes, are the exact phrase in Hebrew, and these are the two phrases used in the book of Jeremiah. Either it says the word of the Lord came to me saying, or it says the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying.

All right. All right, here we go. Jeremiah 33, 33 and verse 1. The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the second time while he was still confined in the courtyard of the guard saying.

Now, verse 19, Jeremiah 33, 19. And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying, verse 23, as the heavenly lights, I'm sorry, verse 23. The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah 34, 12, 34, 12.

And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah 35, 12. All right. Can I just tell you the verses now? The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying, rather than read the others, it's the exact phrase 35, 12, 36, 27, 37, 6, 42, 7, and 43, 8. Now, I put you through that painful process, if you considered it painful, because I want you to note these.

I want you to indicate. Now, some of you don't write in your Bible. I understand.

By the way, if you do very neatly, mark these. You can do that. You can use a sticky tab or whatever if it doesn't mess up the paper.

However you want to mark these, I want you to mark them because, or at least have a notebook with these examples. Remember, chapter 1 through 24, 4, Jeremiah is in the first person. Chapter 29 on, and only 29 on, it's someone else telling us the words of Jeremiah.

Now, remember, the order and arrangement is different between the Hebrew and All of this is going to come together. Now, one of the reasons I want you to mark these occurrences is because we're going to be looking at various things like where the white spaces are, where these oracles come together, and how they come in, and how it's put together as a book. Now, I do want to point out one example of something similar to the third person, after I just told you that 1 through 25 is where the first person material is in Jeremiah.

Look at Jeremiah 1, and this is part of the superscription. The scribe, whether it's Baruch or another editor or redactor later in time, puts this superscription at the front of the document. Go back to Jeremiah 1, 1. The words of Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah from the priest, which were in Anatot, in the land of Benjamin, and then it goes on, who the word of the Lord came to him in the days of Josiah, the son of Ammon.

Okay, now look at verse 2 very closely. It's talking about Jeremiah, to whom it was the word of Jehovah unto him. Now, this is a third person narration.

The writer of the superscription is saying, listen, these are the words of Jeremiah. The word of Jehovah came to him. Jeremiah didn't write this.

Very clear. You get it? Now, hayah davar Yehovah elav, elav, and the word of Jehovah was to him, i.e. Jeremiah. Someone else is telling us that what follows are the words of Jehovah to Jeremiah.

Now, notice by the time you get to verse 4, you switch to the first person. In verse 4, it says, hayah davar Yehovah elav. So, it's like the superscription is tagged onto what could very well be, at least is presented as an authentic word of Jeremiah.

Something, Jeremiah says, God said this to me. And then he says what he said. You have to notice this kind of stuff.

So, it's primarily because of the first person material, but also the third person material, particularly in Jeremiah, seems to, it feels like, it's coming from someone who knows Jeremiah intimately. Someone very close to Jeremiah. In fact, might be sitting in the same room as Jeremiah.

He says, and the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying. You can almost imagine. In fact, I'm going to give you an example.

It's the best example in the Hebrew Bible. We're not going there yet. So, quit looking ahead.

I know you're thinking about going to Jeremiah 36. Don't do it. Don't do it yet.

But it's going to tell us the way that Jeremiah, the word of Jehovah worked through Jeremiah through the hand of a scribe. Baruch actually tells us. Here's what happened.

But that's going to be fun when we get there. So, in short, we have more information primarily because of the first person material and because of the intimate knowledge the third person material conveys to us, i.e. from someone who really must know Jeremiah. We get more information about Jeremiah than any other character in the Bible.

I'm going to put that forward as a statement. And I'm going to back it up over the next few weeks. You get to know Jeremiah.

In fact, a lot of times people call him the weeping prophet or, you know, we even have literary elements that are named after Jeremiah because it conveys this burdensome style that Jeremiah presents. We get to know Jeremiah. We get to know his feelings.

He tells us in his own words more than anybody else. Isaiah can't come close. Hosea, Joel, Amos, Nahum, Micah, none of these get nobody, no one in the Bible, prophet or otherwise.

His name is Yirmeyahu. Yirmeyahu. Yirmeyahu is a theophoric name.

It is, that means that it is a name which incorporates an element of the divine name Yod-Heh-Vav-Heh. It's a shortened form, poetic form, Yahu. Yahu is probably more accurate than the consonant Yahu or Yehovah.

It's actually not consonantal. It's more vowel. It's, you know, people often say, well, the true name is Yehovah.

You have to say it that way or you're going to hell or you're wrong or whatever it is they say. But it's not the consonantal form. It's vowel-ic.

It's Yeh-Yahu, Yahu. It's sort of a flowing. But his name means Yahu exalts or may Yahu raise up.

Now his father is named similarly with a form of another theophoric name. His name is Hilki, Hilki-Yahu, Hilki-Yahu. His name means the portion of Yahu or Yahu's portion or share.

So both of these members of this family, theophoric names, a form, a shortened form, poetic form of the name and Jeremiah and Hilki-Yahu, as we say in English, are priests. But we know a little bit more about them than that. And we know a little bit more about them than that because of the superscription.

Thank you to the redactor, the scribe, whether it be Baruch ben Neriah or someone else. Thank you. We know not only that they're priests, but they are priests ba'anotots, ba'aretz ben Yamin.

They are priests in anotot in the land of Benjamin. Now what do we know, because we're detailed Bible students and scholars, what do we know about the priest who were in anotot ba'aretz ben Yamin? I'll tell you. We actually know quite a bit.

It would be one thing if it just said and Yirmiyahu and Hilki-Yahu were priests. But this gets specific. So I want you to come with me into the text and let's say, what does that mean? I can't skip by this.

This tells me something about this family, and it's going to help us as we tackle tough questions like, who wrote these and why? Why is it, for instance, that Jeremiah is against the sacrificial cult? And he is. Why is it that Jeremiah says that the Ark of the Covenant will not be mentioned or made? Why does he have a negative assessment of the tabernacle at Shiloh? Why is all of these questions, why, why, why, if we know more about the person? And again, remember, we know more about Jeremiah than anybody in the Bible. If we know him, maybe we can understand why he said things the way he said them, and I think that's the case.

So we have to tackle this. There's quite a bit that we actually know about priests who were in anatot, and this is one of the examples that I have to go to other places in the Bible to give you the context, the necessary context. Go with me to the book of Numbers, chapter 35.

Numbers, chapter 35, Bamidbar 35, verse 1. Now, the Lord spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab, third person, by the Jordan opposite Jericho. I just left there, by the way, saying, command the sons of Israel that they give to the Levites from the inheritance of their possession cities to live in, and you shall give to the Levites pasture lands around the cities. The cities shall be theirs to live in, and their pasture land shall be for their cattle, and for their equipment, and for all their other animals.

The pasture lands of the cities which you are to give to the Levites shall extend from the wall of the city outward a thousand cubits around. You also shall measure outside the city on the east side 2,000 cubits, on the south side 2,000, on the west side 2,000, and on the north side 2,000 cubits with the city in the center. This shall be theirs as pasture lands for the cities.

The cities which you shall give to the Levites shall be the six cities of refuge which you shall provide for the one who commits manslaughter to flee to, and in addition to them, in addition to the six cities of refuge, you shall give them 42 cities. The total number of the cities which you are to give to the Levites shall be 48 cities together with their pasture lands, and as for the cities which you shall give them for their possession of the sons of Israel, you shall take more from the larger, and you shall take fewer from the smaller. Each shall give some of his cities to the Levites in proportion to his inheritance which he possesses." So, children of Israel are going to possess the lands east and west of the Jordan Rift.

We have talked about that during our study of the Pentateuch and the sources therein. These lands, because Levi doesn't have a section of land of their own, Jehovah is their portion. Remember the word Hilkiahu, the same word, it's their portion.

Jehovah is the portion for Levi, but Levi is to be given cities in the midst of all of the lands of the children of Israel, 42 in number. Six cities of refuge, 42 in number. Now, here's the way it breaks down.

Go with me to Joshua 21. Joshua 21. This is at the distribution of the land, beginning in verse 1. Then the heads of the fathers of the Levites approached Eliezer the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers' households of the tribes of the sons of Israel.

And they spoke to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, Jehovah commanded through Moses to give us cities to live in with their pasture lands for their cattle. We just read that, Numbers 35. According to Numbers 35, God told Moses, when they get there, this is going to happen, so now they're asking for it in Joshua.

Verse 3, so sons of Israel gave the Levites from their inheritance these cities with their pasture lands in accordance with the command of the Lord. Now, remember, the Levites, they're three branches of the Levites. You have the Kohathites.

Levi has three sons. The three branches, Kohathites, the Gershonites, and the Merorites. Now, verse 4, the lot came out for the family of the Kohathites.

And to the sons of Aaron the priest who were of the Levites, 13 cities were given by lot from the tribe of Judah, from the tribe of Simeon, and from the tribe of Benjamin. Okay, so the Kohathites are going to take 13 cities that are attached to the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, 13 in all. And to the rest of the sons of Kohath, verse 5, 10 cities were given by lot from the families of the tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan, and from the half-tribe of Manasheh.

Now, that half-tribe is on the west side, not east of the Jordan, but west of the Jordan. The Kohathites all dwell west of the Jordan. Kohathites, all west.

So you have 23 cities assigned to the Kohathites. Verse 6 tells us that 13 cities taken from the lands of Yissachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half-tribe of Manasheh, east of the Jordan, go to Gershon. And then Merori gets 12 cities that are west of the Jordan, from Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

Now, 13, 10, 13, and 12 equals 48 total. Now, look at verse 8, Joshua 21, 8. Now, the sons of Israel gave by lot to the Levites these cities and their pasture lands as the Lord had commanded through Moses. Verse 9, they gave these cities which are mentioned here by name from the tribe of the sons of Judah, from the tribe of the sons of Simeon.

And then it says, and they were for the sons of Aaron, one of the families of the Kohathites. And then it starts listing the cities. Now, go down to verse 17.

From the tribe of Benjamin, we're talking about the Kohathites, the priest Kohathites, from the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its pasture lands, Geva with its pasture lands, Anatot with its pasture lands, and Almon with its pasture lands, four cities. Okay. Kohathites, four of the cities that the Kohathites get in which they are to live and dwell in belong to the property that was assigned to Benjamin.

And one of those four assigned to Benjamin is Anatot. Anatot is the place where Hilkiyah and Yirmiyah are from. So, Hilkiyah, Hilkiyah and Jeremiah are descendants of Kohath.

They're descendants of Aaron, and they lived in a Levitical city associated with the tribe of Benjamin. So, when it says in the opening of Jeremiah 1.1, the writer, not Jeremiah, assumes

you know what he's talking about or what she's talking about as the case might be. The words of Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah, who was among the priests who were in Anatot in the land of Benjamin.

And they know that you're going to be very astute. You're going to be very detailed in your study, and you're going to say, ah, so that means Jeremiah and Hilkiah are living in a priestly city assigned to the tribe of Benjamin. They're Kohathites.

They're priests. You put all this together. All right.

Now, there are two identifications competing for the location of ancient Anatot today. Epiphanius at the end of the fourth century, and this was backed by the great American biblical scholar Edward Robinson, the father of biblical geography he's called in the 19th century, call a modern Arab village by the name of Anatah. They say that is ancient Anatot.

They've located it. They say that the Arabic form of the ancient Hebrew is a clue, but they also did archaeology there. Scholars have, and there's a good bit of scholarly support for the views of Epiphanius and Edward Robinson that the Arab city, modern Arab village of Anatah is Anatot.

Now, Condor and Kitchener, two of my big heroes, did a survey of western Palestine in 1881. It was published. I have a copy of it here, and they proposed that the place known as Abu Ghosh, Abu Ghosh, that that is ancient biblical Anatot.

Now, go with me to Jeremiah 29, Jeremiah 29, verse 27. I want to point something out. So now, why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anatot who prophesied to you? Jeremiah is called in this one passage Yirmeyahu of Anatot.

So, he's famous, and he brings fame to the land of Anatot. So, I think it's important we mention that he is the prophet from Anatot. Now, Jeremiah's extended family also lives there.

It is his uncle, Hanamel, that sells him a field in chapter 32. We'll get more into that at the appropriate place in our study. The men of Anatot are also mentioned in the book of Jeremiah.

They even seek his life, and the men of Anatot are punished accordingly because of seeking the life of Jeremiah. The priest of Anatot is a study worthy of time, but a full study is outside the scope of our present class today because it's very detailed and quite involved to get fully into this subject material. But, suffice it to say that there are two lines.

We're talking about the priest of Anatot. There are two lines of competing priest that emerge in the biblical text. Please follow this.

One of the most important things I can tell you today. Two competing factions, if you will, competing groups, and only one, there can only be one, who will ultimately come out on the top, and listen to this, the biblical writers make sure that that happens. There can only be one group of priest, excuse me, that can be on top, not two.

The two groups trace back to Zadok and Aviatar. These are priests for David. Let me show you a couple of passages.

Go with me to second, matter of fact, every bit of this is from 2 Samuel. Go to 2 Samuel 8, 2 Samuel 8, 17, and it says, Zadok, the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech, the son of Aviatar, were priests, and Siriah was the scribe. So, Zadok and Ahimelech, the son of Aviatar, were priests.

Now, go with me to 2 Samuel 15, 2 Samuel 15, verse 24. Now, behold, Zadok also came, and all the Levites with him, carrying the ark of the covenant of God, and they set down the ark of God, and Aviatar came up until all the people had finished crossing over from the city. The king said to Zadok, return the ark of God to the city.

If I found favor in the sight of the Lord, then he will bring me back and show me both it and his habitation. But if he says this, I have no delight in you, then here I am. Let him do to me as it seems good to him.

This is a sad story. David is leaving, but he tells Zadok and Aviatar, take the ark back. If God wills me to come back and show me the place again, then so be it.

Verse 27, the king also said to Zadok, the priest, are you not a seer? Return to the city in peace, and your two sons with you, your son Ahimaaz and Yonatan, the son of Aviatar. I'm going to wait at the river crossing places of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me. Verse 29, so Zadok and Aviatar returned the ark of God to Jerusalem and remain there.

Now, look at verse 35, 2 Samuel 15:35, are Zadok and Aviatar the priest not with you there? So it shall be that whatever you hear from the king's house, you shall report to Zadok and Aviatar the priest. Behold, their two sons are with them, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Yonatan, Aviatar's son, and by them you shall send me everything that you hear. So we have two priests.

By the way, one of the passages, 2 Samuel 20 and verse 25, and Zadok, part B of this verse, Zadok and Aviatar were priests. David is a politician, the most brilliant that's presented in the biblical text. He uses Jerusalem as his capital, which doesn't belong technically to any tribe.

He has two priests, two priests, Zadok and Aviatar. Both serve him. I'm reading a book now on Zadok and the ancient priesthood because a lot of people think they understand Levites and priests and the high priesthood in the ancient world, and chances are they really don't.

It's a very deep subject, very detailed, but what emerges is you have these two groups, Zadok and Aviatar. Now, after the death of David, Aviatar and his house were excluded. They're banished, and from that point for quite some time, Zadok is banished and Aviatar, I'm sorry, Aviatar is banished, and Zadok is there can only be one.

One must increase, the other decrease. Zadok is considered the rightful priest, and Aviatar is out. Now, let me give you the background.

In 1 Kings, as David is dying, 1 Kings 1, verse 5, I'm just going to tell the story. Adonijah, the son of Haggith, exalted himself as king, and he's got some support. He's got some support

from Yoav and from Yoav and Aviatar, and Zadok, however, Binyahu, Natan the prophet, Nathan the prophet, Shemai and Re'i, and some military leaders don't support Adoniah.

So, here we've got the son of David, the son of Haggith, rises up and says, Daddy's dying. Let me introduce myself. I'm the new king.

This is Adonijah. Now, when he does this, he gets support. Let me make this very clear.

From one of the two priests of David, Aviatar, Zadok doesn't join this band. Nathan is now recorded as devising a plan. Now, I just tell it to you like I read it.

You can read it yourself. In fact, let's read this part together. Go to 1 Kings, 1 Kings, chapter 1, beginning in verse 11.

Nathan spoke to Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, saying, this is Nathan to Bathsheba. Have you not heard that Adoniah, the son of Haggith, has become king and David, our Lord, does not know it? So, now come, please, let me give you advice and save your life and the life of your son Solomon. Go at once to King David and say to him, have you not, my Lord, the king sworn to your servant saying, Solomon, your son certainly shall be king after me and he shall sit on my throne? Why then has Adoniah become king? Adoniah, behold, while you are still there speaking with the king, I'll come in after you and confirm your words.

Now, I'm not going to give you a lot of commentary here. I want you to read this and think about it. We don't have anywhere prior to this where David says, Solomon, you're the next guy.

Nathan says, hey, I got a plan. All right. Verse 15, nobody get mad, nobody leave, just hang tight.

In other words, while you're telling David that, I'm going to come in and say, yeah, yeah, yeah, that happened. So, Bathsheba enters into the king in the bedroom. King was very old and Avishag, the Shunammite, was serving the king.

Then Bathsheba bowed and prostrated herself before the king and the king said, what is on your mind? So, she said to him, my Lord, you yourself swore to your servant by the Lord your God saying, your son Solomon certainly shall be king after me and he shall sit on my throne. But now, behold, Adonijah is king and now, my Lord the king, you don't know it. He sacrificed oxen, fatted steers, and sheep in abundance, has invited all the sons of the king, the priest and Yoav, the commander of the army, but he's not invited Solomon, your servant.

And as for you, my Lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you to announce to them, who shall sit on the throne of my Lord the king after him? Otherwise, it had come about as soon as my Lord the king lies down with his fathers that I and my son Solomon will be considered offenders. And behold, while she was yet still speaking with the king, guess who comes in? Nathan the prophet is here. When he came into the king's presence, he bows himself before the king with his face to the ground and Nathan said, my Lord the king, have you yourself said, Adonijah shall be king after me and he shall sit on my throne? For he has gone down

today and has sacrificed oxen and fattened steers and sheep in abundance, invited all the king's sons, commanders of the army and Eviatar the priest.

Please hear me, David, Eviatar the priest is there and behold, they are eating and drinking in his presence and they say, long live king Adonijah, but me, even me, your servant, Zadok the priest, Binyah the son of Yehoiada and your servant Solomon, he's not invited. Has this thing been done by my Lord the king and you've not let your servants know who shall sit on the throne of my Lord the king after him? In other words, they didn't know if it was going to be Solomon, but they didn't know it was going to be Adonijah either. And David responded and said, summon Bathsheba to me.

She came into the king's presence and stood before the king and the king bowed and said, as Jehovah lives who's redeemed my life from all distress, certainly as I vowed to you by the Lord, the God of Israel saying your son Solomon certainly shall be king after me. He shall sit on my throne in my place. I will indeed do so this day.

Bathsheba bowed her face to the ground, bowed herself before the king and said, may my Lord King David live forever. So then after that, Solomon is anointed by Zadok and Natan at the city of David by the Gihon spring. I was just there.

I walked in those very waters. The city is in an uproar. Adonijah is informed that Solomon has been made king.

So they're in there like, I always picture the hideout, you know, like the bandits and Adonijah and Eviatar and they all say, hey, you, this is me. You hear the, they're blowing shofar, you know, that all the hooping and hollering going down in the city of David and what's going on, what's going on? And then word comes to him, hey, uh-oh, Solomon has been anointed at Gihon by the prophet and David has said he's going to be the king, not you Adonijah. So this sets off a whole deal.

Adonijah has to hold on to the horns and hope he doesn't die. And then David dies. First Kings chapter 2 verse 10, and immediately everyone who sided against Solomon becomes in fact enemies of the state.

Adonijah is enemy number one. Now Adonijah doesn't help himself. He decides that while he's in sort of a lockdown mode, in other words, as long as you stay here, you're allowed to live, but the second you bare your head out, you're going to die.

He somehow thinks it's a good idea to ask for one of David's wives. And for the life of me, I cannot see how he thought that was a good idea. But anyway, he did and now he's in trouble.

Now look at First Kings chapter 2 verse 26. First Kings chapter 2 verse 26. So Solomon dismissed Eviatar from being priest to the Lord, to get this, fulfill the word of the Lord, which he spoke regarding the house of Eli in Shiloh.

That's a whole nother class, but we will tear into some of this as we get more into it. The priest in this competing factions and who is going to be on top and who's not. Well, the

point I want you to get at this point is, and the writer wants you to know that this is a fulfillment of a previous word.

God was going to cut off one of these priestly lines where they would be no more. And it happened to be Eviatar's line and it all came about because Solomon wasn't supported, but Adonijah was supported. Now brought that story in for a very important reason.

Because after the death of David, Zadok ascends, Eviatar is put away. Eviatar, you ought to die son, but I can't kill you because you did all those holy and good things for my father. And then Solomon is king.

Now again, we're going to get into the whole question of the monarchy. Is that even something God wanted? And was Solomon the intended person? Was Solomon the one that was supposed to be? And many of you are saying, yeah, of course, there are things that says, and your son Solomon shall reign after you. But I have to ask you, let's keep working through the text.

Right now, Solomon is king and Zadok is his priest. Eviatar is banished. He's banished to Anatote.

Now, notice that it says to his fields. It wasn't like he's banished to the Siberian front. He's sent to Anatote, his own place, because he's a priest from Anatote.

Now, you begin to get this idea that the banishment of Eviatar to the place of Anatote, which happens to be the very place that brings us Hilkiah and Jeremiah. So, how is it that the priesthood, the branch of the priest which were exiled and banished according to the word of the Lord given to Eli, how do they get back in? Ladies and gentlemen, this rejected line, this forgotten house would in days to come bring forth a righteous priest. He was known before he was formed in his mother's womb.

He was consecrated before his birth a prophet to the nations. This priest, this righteous priest of a forsaken and forgotten line would oversee the end of a man-made monarchical system, an accommodation to the desire of people to be like the nations. This priest would see that in ruins.

This priest would call for and predict and prophesy and foresee a restoration of everything, a new covenant, not like the covenant that God made with the fathers when he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, which that covenant they broke, though God was a husband to them. But this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my law in their hearts and forgive their sins.

This priest brought forward the seed bed for life without the external trappings that the people of Israel had so desired. His name was Yirmeyahu and he was the prophet like Moses and more. Don't miss next week.

Shabbat Shalom.