

Prophet Slayer - The Prophet Jeremiah: 12

(0:25 - 8:45)

Okay, good morning and Shabbat Shalom. Welcome to United Israel World Union. This is our Sabbath morning scripture study.

Thank you so much for joining us today. I am excited. We are still in our ongoing study of the world and words of the prophet Jeremiah, and this is class number 12 in this ongoing series.

We are now beyond the days of Josiah. We've gone through the short three-month reign of Yehoahaz, and now we are dealing with the days of Yehoiakim, named initially by his parents Eliakim. His name was changed to Yehoiakim, by the Egyptian king Necho.

So now we're in the days of Yehoiakim. We're going to be looking very carefully at the words, particularly within the book of Jeremiah. We're going to be looking specifically for clues within the text that put us beyond doubt in the days of Yehoiakim, and so what we're dealing with basically is an 11-year period.

So we're looking at not only the book of Jeremiah, but particularly the book of Jeremiah, and within the time frame during which Jeremiah is receiving the words of the Lord, we're looking for an 11-year period. And why is that? Because in 2 Kings chapter 23 verse 36, in 2 Chronicles chapter 36 and verse 5, we read that Yehoiakim was 25 years old when he became king, and then it tells us in both of these accounts, sometimes they have differences in terms of what they report, but in both of these accounts, in Kings and Chronicles, we read not only that he began his reign at the age of 25, but that he served as king for 11 years. Now, I want to remind everyone that whenever we're looking to properly arrange or place the events or the words of these particular, the material from Jeremiah, we are admittedly basing some of what we're doing on information that is incomplete and or uncertain.

So I am approaching this as carefully as I can, but some things we just can't discern from the text. Let me clarify just a little bit more. Our work to untangle these texts is complicated by several factors.

Number one, and I demonstrated some of this in previous classes, number one, the chapters, as you will recall from previous classes, in Jeremiah are not in order. They are clearly not in order, everyone knows this, most good study Bibles will tell you that, and it is clear as we work through the text that they're not in order. So that's difficulty number one, the texts are not in order.

Now one that's a little bit tougher for people to accept, but I have to show it in order to be honest, honest to Jeremiah, honest to God, and honest to the biblical text, is that there are times, I'm going to get into one today, where the Meseretic text of the Bible has a mistake. Everyone take a deep breath and think about that for a moment, and I'm going to show you one of those mistakes today. It's not the end of the world, it doesn't do anything to destroy our faith, but knowing these things is very important.

So I want you to go this morning to Jeremiah chapter 27, Jeremiah chapter 27, and this is where we will begin class number 12 today. Class number 12, Jeremiah chapter 27, and verse 1. I'm reading from the ASV today, most English translations will follow closely to what

I have here, and I'll point out the issue with the Meseretic text of verse 1. It says, in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word unto Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, I'm going to stop there for just a moment, you can see why I would begin today's class with this particular verse, because according to what I just read, this is a word of the Lord that comes to Jeremiah at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim. Well, if we're looking at an 11-year period, and we want to begin and follow things in order, it's a great place to begin.

Let's continue reading. Thus saith Jehovah to me, make thee bonds and bars and put them upon thy neck, and send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the children of Ammon, and to the king of Tyre, and to the king of Sidon, by the hand of the messengers that came to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah, king of Judah. Wait a minute.

See how it began by suggesting to us that we were in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the word of the Lord comes to Jeremiah, and then we work down two verses later, and it lets us know that we're not in the days of Jehoiakim, but rather we're in the days of Zedekiah. Now, the same thing occurs if you go down to verse 8 and you go to verse 20. Clearly, context indicates that this is not the days of Jehoiakim, it's not the beginning of the reign, it's not the middle of his reign, it's not the end of Jehoiakim's reign, it's not even in the days of Jehoiakim.

So we've got clearly a scribal error here, and sages and scholars have noted this for quite a long time. Context clearly shows that the events that are described in chapter 27 of Jeremiah, despite what the Masoretic text records here about it being the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, these things took place in the days of Zedekiah and not Jehoiakim. Now, I first discovered this scribal mistake, meaning I first discovered it, I'm not the one who discovered it, but I first noticed it when I began to look at the words and words of Jeremiah the prophet, because what I initially set out to do, knowing that the texts are not in order, was to build a table.

Not like this kind of table, but a table on paper. And I wanted to put columns, and so I knew based on Jeremiah 1.1 that we have several kings. Jeremiah 1.1 says that the word of the Lord came first to Jeremiah from the 13th year of Josiah, then it says through the days of Jehoiakim, and then unto the 11th year of Zedekiah and the carrying away of Babylon.

(8:46 - 11:24)

So you can imagine on my paper I put Josiah, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah, captivity, and then I looked for textual clues as I worked through the text of Jeremiah, and I would write in columns, this chapter belongs here, this chapter belongs in this section. Then you can begin to properly lay out the days of the prophecies of Jeremiah, because once you get it in order, things begin to make a lot more sense. Now chapter 27 in my initial pass-through was originally, initially, plugged in by me into the Zedekiah column.

I said, oh, chapter 27, the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, it goes here. What I began to realize is that I looked over the list, there are other textual clues that clearly put us in the days of Jehoiakim, and those are primarily the fourth year and the fifth year of his reign. If you look at the text of Jeremiah, what you'll find is that Jeremiah, the book of Jeremiah,

gives us a whole lot more information about Jehoiakim's reign, fourth and fifth year of his reign.

In fact, there are like ten textual clues that put us there. So that's a big, important time frame during the reign of Jehoiakim. Now remember, when we did the days of Josiah, you get a little bit, you get like the beginning of his reign where he's eight years old when he assumes the throne, and then you get, according to Chronicles but not Kings, you get the eighth year of his reign, the twelfth year of his reign, and then you go all the way to the eighteenth year of his reign, most of the material we have on Josiah's reign is focused on that 18th year.

Then, of course, it gives you, fast forward, you go from the 18th, there's nothing from the 19th to the 30th, and then you get the story of his death in the 31st year of his reign. Jehoiakim is similar in that, of the eleven years, most of what Jeremiah tells us takes place in the fourth year and the fifth year. As I pointed out last week, we've got a little bit about the third year of his reign, but that's not in the book of Jeremiah, that's in the book of Daniel.

(11:24 - 20:45)

We'll get to that. So what we've got here, we're faced with the the issue of this, if we want to progress through Jeremiah's world and words and through his prophecies and to put those in order, and I do want to do this, then we've got to pay very close attention. So I'm certainly not going to teach about the fifth year of Jehoiakim's reign before I teach about the fourth year, and I'm not going to teach about the fourth year until I at least touch on the third year, and I'm not going to do any of that until I bring us to the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign.

That makes sense, right? If you want to do it in order. If you don't want to do it in order, you just pick up Jeremiah and you read it like most people, and you never notice that the things aren't in order. So now you understand why I want to begin in class 12 with, let's go to the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign.

So I first thought we'd start with chapter 27, but 27 turns out it's not the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign. It's actually Zedekiah. We had to pay attention to see that.

Now that we know it, we have to look, is there anything else in the book of Jeremiah or anywhere else in the Bible which tells us about the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim? And in fact, we do. It's not 27, but go with me to Jeremiah chapter 26. Jeremiah 26.

And now, let's look at chapter 26. As far as a high-level overview, let's look at the opening and see if there's a textual clue here. In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word from Jehovah saying.

Well, it says that we're in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim. A little bit gun-shy here because 27 said the same thing, but context told us something different. Well, I can go ahead and tell you to relax, because chapter 26 has nothing in it which tells us something different than, this is the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim.

So as you read chapter 26, you won't find that this is a scribal error. You'll find that everything seems to be consistent with the opening of Jeremiah 26. Now, just as a side

point, you have to wonder, how did this scribal error happen in the Mesoretic text of the Bible? How did it that chapter 27 verse 1 said that it was the reign of Jehoiakim when it was actually the reign of Zedekiah? Well, the scribes, the later redactor who's pulling this material together, clearly had on his mind, or her mind, as the case might be, they just did chapter 26 if this is the way it came together, and in 26 it does say in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim.

This is a fairly common scribal mistake where in the scribe's mind the person has already written the beginning of the days of Josiah, or Jehoiakim, or whoever, and then, honey, it's time to eat, you know, and they get distracted and they come back and they make this mistake. It's fairly common. Okay, now we're going to continue to read.

Let's look at, let's read verses 1 through 3. In the beginning, by the way, that phrase b'reishi, in Hebrew, b'reishi, in the beginning, it's the way the Hebrew Bible begins, Genesis 1.1, in the beginning, b'reishi. Well, the only other occurrences of b'reishi, there are five total, and they all occur in Jeremiah except for Genesis 1.1. So what that means, it helps us, first of all, to understand Genesis 1.1. It means in getting started, or at the first, at the first of Jehoiakim's reign, this is the way things went down. All right.

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word from Jehovah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, Stand in the court of Jehovah's house and speak unto all the cities of Judah which come to worship in Jehovah's house. All the words that I command you to speak unto them diminish not a word. It may be that they will hearken and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil which I propose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings.

Now, so here's what we're starting with. At the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, God tells Jeremiah, Go stand in the court of Beth Jehovah, the temple. Go stand in the court of the temple, and you're going to give this message.

Now what we have in 26, 1 through 3, is we have the when, the where, the who, and the why. When? Beginning of Jehoiakim's reign. Where? Court of Jehovah's house in the temple.

Who? It's going to be Jeremiah speaking to, as it puts it, all the cities of Judah who come to worship. In other words, all those who are coming from all the places through the land of Judea, and particularly Judea, but at times some from the northern Israel. But whoever comes to the house to worship, this is who you're going to address.

The why that's given in the text is that perhaps they'll repent and avoid the catastrophe that God has determined against this place and its people because of their wrongdoings. God says because of their bad doings, I've proposed bad. However, if they respond appropriately to your appeal when you go stand in the court of my house and proclaim this to all those coming to worship, things will go well.

Jeremiah, go. Now what he is going to say is given to us in the next verses. Again, we have the when, where, who, and why in verses 1 through 3. We have to go to verses 4 through 6 to see what is it that he is going to speak in the court of Jehovah's house to all the worshipers coming to that house.

And here's what he's to say. Verse 4, chapter 26, And you shall say unto them, Thus says Jehovah, If ye will not hearken to me to walk in my Torah, or my law, my instruction, which I put before you, to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets whom I send unto you, even rising up early and sending them, but ye have not hearkened, then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth. So they've got an option presented, an opportunity presented to them.

God says through Jeremiah, you're gonna stand right there in the court of the house and you're going to say to the worshipers, you had better hearken to the words of the Torah that I put before you. Remember, just not too long ago, his actual Torah, the original, had been put before them when it was discovered in the days of Josiah in 622 BCE. The people are coming from all over into the restored house.

(20:46 - 22:14)

You remember that? Remember not too long ago in the days of Josiah in the 18th year of his reign, the Levites and under the direction of the group that discovered, there was a great restoration in the days of Josiah. The Torah was placed before him. He says if you hearken to the words of that Torah, then the evil will not come your way.

Now, before we go further into chapter 26 of Jeremiah, we're not finished, we have to consider something else. Many associate the text of chapter 26 with chapter 7. Remember, things aren't in order. So many associate chapter 26 with chapter 7, and the reason they do this, most study Bibles, if you open it up a good study Bible, will say see chapter 7, if you're reading in 26.

If you're reading in 7, it's gonna say see 26. Now the reason that is, is because both of these chapters contain points of congruence. There are several things in each of these chapters that sounds like it's the same story.

(22:15 - 31:55)

Slightly different, but it seems to jive, and let me give you a couple of clues. In both of these, Jeremiah is told to stand at the house of the Lord. Stand at the house of the Lord.

In both accounts, in 7 and 26, Jeremiah is to speak to the worshippers, in both 7 and 26, to make an appeal to repent. And in both of these accounts, in 7 and 26, there is an impending threat of destruction of the temple associated with a comparison of this house, the one Jeremiah would be standing in, the one worshippers would be coming into, this house, the one, look around people, this house, it's gonna be like Shiloh. Now, in Jeremiah, only in chapter 7 and chapter 26 is there a threat to destroy the house and the connection between the destruction of that house and Shiloh.

Go look at my house that was in Shiloh. Now, Jeremiah only mentioned Shiloh in one other text, in Jeremiah 41 verse 5, but there it has nothing to do with the house that was destroyed, none of that. It's just a verse that mentions the location.

Now, there are differences as well. One of the things I intended to do, but it was a little bit more detailed than I felt like we could handle in one day, was to look not only for the similarities, the harmonistic readings between 7 and 26, but to look at the differences. So I

began yesterday, spent many hours making a document like I've done in other classes where I produced a horizontal reading.

Jeremiah 7 on the left, Jeremiah 26 on the right, and I started working through that text. And what it revealed is that there are plenty of similarities, but there are also some differences between the two. So many that I had to really ponder.

You could see me, if you came yesterday, as I rubbed my head and I thought about it and I asked myself the question, are these the same event? Because I want to talk about the Temple Sermon of Jeremiah, as it is often referred to, but I had questions. And here are some differences. In other words, nothing says in the text of 7 or 26, the actual text, that this is an event already covered, or see later in the text and you'll read the rest.

Nothing says they have to be the same event, but they look pretty similar. But here are a couple of differences. Chapter 7 doesn't give us any timing.

In other words, it doesn't, in chapter 7, nothing says at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, or this many years after this, or there's no contextual evidence for timing in 7. Chapter 26, on the other hand, says this happened at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign. So that's a difference. And it may not be that big of a deal, because if they look enough the same and we determine they're the same event, then we simply now know that chapter 7 is also at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim.

Now, one thing that caught my attention is that, again, both of these, Jeremiah is told to go stand, same word that's used, *ein mim dalet*, to stand, station yourself, Jeremiah, in the house of Jehovah, but there's one difference. So look at chapter 26, verse 2, it says, thus says Jehovah, stand in the court of Jehovah's house and speak unto the cities of Judah. Now go with me to Jeremiah 7, verse 1, the word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, stand in the gate of Jehovah's house.

Okay, now some of you might be saying, oh come on, Ross, the gate, the court, just, you know, give it a break. Well, I'm sorry, it's not my personality, it's not what I'm doing with this study. I want to look closely.

So I had a question going into this. Is the gate of chapter 7 where Jeremiah is to stand, is that or can that be the same as the court of the courtyard, or is it a big deal at all, or does one reading preclude the possibility that these are the same event? I think it's likely, let me say up front, that these two accounts are about the same event. I believe that despite that slight difference there, and believe me there are many other differences, but this one really caught my attention, but I want to stress that we're dealing here with conjecture.

I believe that based on the best available evidence that these two events, despite the differences in the narratives, that they are describing the same temple sermon, and that's the purpose of this class today. So, but what kept nagging at me was this idea of can the gate of Jehovah's house be the same as the court or the courtyard of Jehovah's house? In other words, where is the gate in relation to the courtyard, you know, like if you're standing, I'm not making a mountain out of a molehill, as we say, but but if you're standing at the gate, are you in the courtyard? Okay, you see what I'm saying? So let's let's take this a little bit further. Now, what I had to do because of who I am and how I think, I had to say, okay

Bible software, show me every occurrence of gate, gate Jehovah, and then show me every occurrence of courtyard, house of Jehovah, and let's look at them.

So here are a couple of texts. First thing I want you to do is go with me to Jeremiah chapter 36 and verse 10. Jeremiah 36 verse 10.

Now just understand, this is not the days of Jehoiakim, but I'm using this to illustrate this location within gate Jehovah. Here we go, verse 10, chapter 36. Then Baruch in the book, then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah, in the house of Jehovah, Jehovah in the chamber of Gamariah, the son of Shaphan, the scribe in the upper court at the entry of the new gate of Jehovah's house in the ears of all the people.

So what I want you to understand what's going on here, and we'll get into this in much more detail later, Baruch, the faithful scribe of Jeremiah, Jeremiah can't go, he's detained, we'll talk about that later, but Baruch goes for him and he's going to read the words of a scroll and he's in the chamber of Gamariah, Shaphan, the son of Shaphan, the scribe, but notice where he's at. He's going to read these words, says he's in the upper court. Now in Hebrew it's ha'elyon p'taksha al beit Jehovah.

He's in the upper court at the opening where the gate opens to the house of Jehovah. So you see what I'm reading here is that Jeremiah, I mean Baruch, is stationed between the gate, the opening of the gate, and the courtyard. He's right there.

So if somebody were describing this they could say, hey guys, Baruch is right now at beit Jehovah, and he's reading the words of a scroll. Where's he at? He's right there at the gate. And someone else runs up and they go, hey, hey, Baruch is at beit Jehovah, he's in the courtyard, he's in the upper courtyard, he's reading something.

Well, Yochanan just told us that he's in the gate. Yeah, I mean he's in the gate, he's right there, he's at the courtyard, he's at the gate, yeah, that's right, in the upper courtyard. So you see these places it's not that big of a deal because you've got both of these places mentioned.

(31:56 - 43:59)

Now I think that this could very well be a very well-known place and quite possibly a place where such actions might be pretty common. That a prophet or his scribe might go and read, the people might be assembled in this particular area. Now when I looked, when I did my research, gate, sha'ar in Hebrew, and beit Jehovah, the house of Jehovah, come together nine texts.

There are nine texts which pull these two together, the gate of the house of Jehovah. Now there are other gates, sometimes it's mentioned in the plural, but how many gates, you know, if you look at the ancient descriptions in the biblical text, it's different than what we see in modern Jerusalem, but this is not for that class. Now whenever I looked at the word court or courtyard and beit Jehovah, I found 12 texts which put those two together.

12 texts. Here are a couple that mention the courtyards. Let's go through three of these for my examples.

Go with me to 2 Kings, 2 Kings 21 and verse 5. 2 Kings 21 verse 5. I'm not really going into the details here, I'm not giving you context, I just want you to listen for certain key words. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of Jehovah. Ah, two courts.

Two courts in the house of Jehovah. You might want to know this. I'm talking about the first temple, we're not talking about the second temple.

A lot of people go to conferences where they learn about the height of every step and how many cracks were in the step, and every detail about every detail about the second temple period. I'm talking about the first temple, and there are two courts according to this text. Let's see if that holds up.

Go with me to 2 Kings, 2 Kings chapter 23 and verse 12. And the altars, 2 Kings 23 12, the altars that were on the roof of the upper chamber of Achaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasheh had made in the two courts of the house of Jehovah. Did the king break down and beat them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron? Again, we had two courts in the house of Jehovah.

One more text, 2 Chronicles 33 and verse 5. 2 Chronicles 33 verse 5, and he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of Jehovah. So what we understand is that in the first temple there are two courts, and what we read in the narratives of the day that we're dealing with today is that something is taking place in the upper, the Elyon, the upper court. So that must indicate that of the two courts, one is referred to as the upper court of the house of Jehovah.

Now, the purpose of this class, again, is not to get into too much detail on the temple, but rather to ask the question, does the reference in Jeremiah 7, which mentions the gate of the house of Jehovah, and the reference in Jeremiah chapter 26, which mentions the court or the courtyard, do these two present such a problem? And the answer to that, ladies and gentlemen, is just based on the illustration that I told you. And imagine that this particular incident takes place, Jeremiah gives his temple sermon at a location between what is referred to as the upper court and the gate. Which gate is that? Again, beyond the scope of the class today.

But he's right there. He's at a very key location where worshipers are going to be coming into the Beit Jehovah. They had to go through the gate.

Where are they going to go when they cross through the gate? They're going to go into the courtyard. So the people who are there would be able to report, Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah, at it again. What do you mean he's at it again? Goodness man, the guy is right there.

As soon as you go in the gate, he's in the courtyard, and guess what? He's talking against the priesthood and the sacrifices and the temple. He wouldn't believe it, and people are probably running to go see this. So I think that quite possibly, the temple sermon as it's presented, or as I'm calling it in chapter 7, is very much, very likely to be the same sermon that is described in chapter 26.

Okay, without further ado, the focus, by the way, on this temple sermon is, guess what? The temple, he's there, he's in the courtyard right at the gate, he says, the house is going down. It's going to be destroyed. This is the focus of his talk, and again, I want to refresh your memory, this is on the heels.

Everybody is comfortable now. They feel like the temple has been restored, hallelujah, we have the temple, it's been redone, we have the holy priesthood, they're wearing their perfect garments, everything is lovely, we just came out of a great revival, it's all going well, this is going to be happily ever after. That's what they think.

Jeremiah says not so. Jeremiah chapter 7, please. Jeremiah singing in verse 1, the word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah saying, stand in the gate of Jehovah's house and proclaim there this word and say, hear the word of Jehovah, all ye of Judah that enter in these gates to worship Jehovah.

Thus says Jehovah of hosts to God of Israel, amend your ways and your doings and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Starts off on a positive note. Trust ye not in lying words, saying the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these.

For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbor, if ye oppress not the sojourner, the fatherless, the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your own hurt, then will I cause you to dwell in this place in the land that I gave to your fathers from of old, even forever more. Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. You know what the lying words are? The lying words are the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these.

And there's innocent blood being shed in that place? What kind of innocent blood is being shed in the temple? Huh, wonder what that could be. Look further. Behold, you trust, verse 8, in lying words that cannot profit.

Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods that ye have not known, and come and stand before me in this house which is called by my name, and say, we're delivered, that we may do all these abominations? Is this house which is called by my name become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, saith Jehovah. That's a sermon. How well do you think that was received? In the temple, in the courtyard, in the gate, as soon as people walk in, the first thing they hear? They're shocked.

Now, one of the things he says, God says, is this place become a den of robbers? Which literally, in the Hebrew, this Jeremiah is saying, what God is telling you is that this building is a cave of violent ones. He refers to the temple, the house of Jehovah, as a cave, like imagine this dark cave of violence. Wow.

That's not the picture that they had. Their trust was in the building. It wasn't a cave of violent ones to them, they're saying the temple of the Lord.

Now, look at verse 12. But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh. By the way, after verse 11 is a white space, but it's still God speaking through the prophet.

Go ye unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I caused my name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. And now, and now, because you've done all these works, says Jehovah, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but you listened not, and I called you and you answered not. Therefore will I do unto this house which is called by my name, wherein you trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers as I did to Shiloh.

White space. Your trust is in this building? Go to Shiloh, where people used to put their trust. I destroyed that one too.

But you keep doing these things that you're doing, shedding innocent blood in this place, you know, you're trusting in the wrong thing. This place is going down just like that one. All right.

Now, up to this point, it's been addressed to the group. Now in verse 16 through 20, I'm gonna pass over just to make the comment that this section set off by white spaces is directed to Jeremiah. So it's like he just said to the group, I'm gonna cast you just like I did your brethren out of this place.

Now then there's a white space, and I want you to imagine God now talking to Jeremiah. Hey, Jeremiah, therefore pray not for you for this people. You don't pray for this people.

Jeremiah's hearing God tell him, according to the text, this is not, he's not saying this to the people, this is presented in the singular. Therefore pray not thou for this people. You, singular.

(44:00 - 56:09)

And it goes on in the singular all the way down to verse 20. Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, this also is to Jeremiah. Now, verse 21, after the white space, thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel.

Still talking, he's in the temple. Add your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat the flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices.

But this thing I commanded them, saying, hearken unto my voice, and I'll be your God, you shall be my people. Walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you. But they hearken not, nor incline their ear, but walked in their own counsels, and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.

Since the day that your fathers, he's still talking to the people in the gate, came out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I've sent you unto you all my servants of prophets daily, rising up early, sending them. Yet they hearken not unto me, nor incline the ear, but made their necks stiff, and they did worse than their fathers. He's already told them the temple's going to be destroyed, and when I brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, I didn't command them about sacrifice and offering.

They're in the temple. Now how do you think the priests are going to respond to that? It's a commotion. By the way, after this, look at verse 27.

You shall speak all these words to them, but they will not hearken to you. You shall also call unto them, but they're not going to answer you. And you shall say unto them, this is the nation that has not listened to the voice of Jehovah their God, nor received instruction.

Truth is perished and is cut off from their mouth. And then Jeremiah is told, cut your hair and do this and do that. So 7 is describing, if we think about it now, 7 is describing what he is to do, right? Now what does that tell us about what's going on in 26? Could this be where he actually does it? Now go to chapter 26 with me.

Let's look at this. Jeremiah 26, verse 1. In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word from Jehovah, saying, Thus said Jehovah, Stand in the court of Jehovah's house and speak unto all the cities of Judah which come to worship in Jehovah's house. All the words that I command you to speak unto them diminish not a word.

It may be that they'll hearken and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent of me of the evil which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings. And you'll say unto them, Thus says Jehovah, If you'll not hearken to me to walk in my Torah which I set before you, to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets whom I sent unto you, even rising early and sending them, but you've not hearkened, then I'll make this house like Shiloh, and I'll make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth. And the priest, and the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of Jehovah.

So now do you see? Jeremiah 7 is, here's what you're going to do. This is where he does it. All right, we ready? And it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking, all that Jehovah had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priest, and the prophets, and all the people laid hold on him, saying, You shall surely die.

Why have you prophesied in the name of Jehovah, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered unto Jeremiah in Beth Jehovah. All of them, they're circling around him, you see. And when the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house.

See, word spreads throughout Jerusalem, under the house of Jehovah, and they set in the entry of the new gate of Jehovah's house. And now we're getting a little more specific. Where are we at when this happens? Then spake the priest, and prophets, unto the princes, and all the people, saying, This man is worthy of death, for he's prophesied against this city, as you've heard with your ears.

Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes, and to all the people, saying, Jehovah sent me to prophesy against this house, and against this city, all the words that you've heard. When did he do that? Jeremiah chapter 7. Now therefore, amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God, and Jehovah will repent him of the evil that he's pronounced against you. This goes back to chapter 7. But as for me, behold, I'm in your hand.

Do with me as is good and right in your eyes. Only know ye for certain that, if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the

inhabitants thereof. For of a truth, Jehovah has sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears." Now remember, the people are chomping at the bits.

They want to kill Jeremiah. How dare you give a word of Jehovah that's not favorable? See, what they like is reports that the land is full of revival. They love reports from the administration that say things are going well.

Zephaniah was a prophet in the days of Josiah. He never knew about any revival or anything good. He said, this place is off the hook.

It's off the chain. And Jeremiah doesn't know about, but the word from the administration is, read Kings and Chronicles, is, wow, things are going swell. But these prophets don't have that message.

They're told, go tell these people, if you repent, because you haven't, but if you repent, I'll spare it. Otherwise, you need to go look at Shiloh. It's going down.

So the people gather around Jeremiah, and it's like they're saying, this man deserves to die because he's proclaimed that the temple in Jerusalem is going to be destroyed. This isn't just a little rogue group of bad priests. This is, ladies and gentlemen, the establishment.

This is the religious police. These people who want to kill Jeremiah are the priest, the prophets, right? But someone in the group, as I can imagine this is getting pretty heated, someone, you might say, good sense prevailed, someone remembered a story kind of similar to this. They say, ho, ho, ho, hold up, hold up.

I don't know if I'm going to give you that. Yeah, let's look at verse 16. Then the princes and all the people said unto the priest and to the prophets, this man is not worthy of death, for he's spoken to us in the name of Jehovah our God.

Then rose up certain elders of the land and spake to all the assembly of the people saying, hey, Micah the Morestite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and he spake to all the people of Judah saying, thus says Jehovah of hosts, Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become a heap, and the mountain of the house as a high places of a forest. Did Hezekiah, they continued, did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not fear Jehovah and entreat the favor of Jehovah, and Jehovah repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against him? Thus should we commit great evil against our own souls? Interesting. So they remember this story about Micah the Morestite.

I want you to go with me to Micah chapter 1, Micah 1 verse 1. The word of Jehovah that came to Micah the Morestite, the days of Yotam, Achaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah. He's talking about the prophet Micah. This is more than a hundred years earlier, but they remember, see? Now go with me to the book of Micah chapter 3, and I want to read this section, part of which the people of Jeremiah's day remembered.

So go with me to chapter 3 verse 9. This is what Micah said, Hear this, I pray you, you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel that abhor justice and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priest therefore thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine

for money, yet they lean on Jehovah and say, is not Jehovah in the midst of us? No evil shall come upon us, therefore shall Zion for your sake, meaning you religious political leaders, for your sake, Zion will be plowed as a field, means all the buildings will be destroyed, not one stone will be left on another, and Jerusalem will become heaps in the mountain of the house as high places of the forest.

Jeremiah was not the only prophet in his day that declared that the temple would be destroyed. Not talking about hold of the prophetess, she gave some bad information to Josiah, saying he'd go to his grave in peace and he died with an arrow. I'm not talking about Zephaniah.

Zephaniah we read in Zephaniah 1.1 prophesied during the days of Josiah. Days of Josiah are over. Talking about another prophet, perhaps you've heard of him, name is Uriah.

(56:09 - 59:12)

Uriah. Ring a bell? The prophet Uriah. Days of Jeremiah, days of Jehoiakim, well let's see what he said.

Look with me at Jeremiah 26, Jeremiah 26, beginning in verse 20. And there was also a man that prophesied in the name of Jehovah. Uriah the son of Shemaiah of Kiriath Yareen.

And he prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah. And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men and all his princes heard his words, the king sought to put him to death. When Uriah heard it he was afraid and he fled and went to Egypt.

And Jehoiakim the king sent men into Egypt. Namely Elnatan the son of Akbar and certain men with him into Egypt. So Uriah says this temple is going to be destroyed and then word gets out that King Jehoiakim wants to kill him so he runs to Egypt and Jehoiakim says uh-uh go get him.

He sends Elnatan, Ben-Akbar, and some others. He says go get him and bring him back. Verse 23, and they fetched forth Uriah out of Egypt, brought him under Jehoiakim the king who slew him with the sword and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people.

But the hand of Icom, the son of Shefan, was with Jeremiah that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death. We have no other mention of Uriah, the prophet that Jehoiakim killed with a sword. What we do know is that Judah, its rulers, religious political rulers were on a pathway to hell and they were in a hurry to get there.

No turning back. Obstinate, stiff of neck, and they killed the one that God sent to him. They wanted to kill Jeremiah.

This is wicked. This is an evil and adulterous general. Go with me to Nehemiah chapter 9, verse 26.

(59:16 - 1:01:05)

Nehemiah 9 26 says, Nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against thee and cast your Torah behind their back and slew your prophets that testified against them to turn

them again unto you. And they wrought great provocations. O Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets, torture those that are sinned.

Hear this echoed in the streets. Who is El Natan, the son of Akbar? Who is Ahicham, the son of Shaphan? The temple sermon of Jeremiah 26 began with a warning to follow the Torah that God had set before them. The man who saved Jeremiah was connected to that discovery of the Torah.

You'll have to join me next Sabbath to learn about that connection between the man and the family who saved Jeremiah from certain death, and the discovery of the Torah that was put before the people that they cast behind their backs, choosing rather to put a sword against the neck of the prophets that God sent to them.