

Jeremiah: Chronological Clarity

Description:

This paper seeks to reveal the internal chronology of the book of Jeremiah, a task that scholars have puzzled over for centuries due to the apparent lack of chronological arrangement.

The tangled narrative threads spread across a 40-year period, from the 13th year of Josiah (627 BCE) to the 11th year, fifth month of Zedekiah (586 BCE). Guided by the subtle cues hidden in the texts, we embark on an ambitious journey to construct a more logically ordered narrative of Jeremiah's prophetic messages.

We dissect the chronology, starting by attributing the chapters to their corresponding rulers: Josiah, Jehoahaz/Shallum, Eliakim/Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin/Jeconiah/Coniah, Zedekiah, Gedaliah, and events following Gedaliah's assassination. We progressively slot each chapter under its respective king, thus setting the stage for a more refined ordering.

Our next stage involves meticulously rearranging these chapters based on additional textual cues and identifying the fact that many chapters incorporate events from different periods. The result? A comprehensive guide designed to present the Book of Jeremiah restored as closely as possible to chronological order.

While some chapters still remain unassigned (2, 4-21, 23, 30-31), rest assured that we are diligently exploring potential leads to appropriately place them within the revised Jeremiah narrative. This study then represents an ongoing analysis of these tangled texts.

Consider these notes as an introduction to a groundbreaking project, a promising first step in producing a more detailed work to appear at a later date.

Reigns of the Relevant Kings of Judah

Josiah (640-609 BCE) 2 Kings 22:1-23:30a / 2 Chronicles 34:1-35:27

Jehoahaz/Shallum (609 BCE) 2 Kings 23:30b-33 / 2 Chronicles 36:1-4

Eliakim/Jehoiakim (609/8-598 BCE) 2 Kings 23:34-24:7 / 2 Chronicles 36:4-8

Jehoiachin/Jeconiah/Coniah (598/7 BCE) 2 Kings 24:6-17 / 2 Chronicles 36:8-10

Mattaniah/Zedekiah (597-586 BCE) 2 Kings 24:17f / 2 Chronicles 36:10f

Additional Biblical Sources

Zephaniah – Reign of Josiah (see 1:1)

Daniel – (see for example 1:1-5)

Ezekiel – Chapters 1-24 align with seven years of Zedekiah's reign – See for example 1:2-3 and dates throughout these chapters culminating in chapter 24.

Chapters Referencing Judean Rulers

Josiah	Jehoahaz/Shallum	Jehoiakim	Jehoiachin	Zedekiah
(1, 3:6), 19-year overlap between Jeremiah and Josiah (627-609 BCE).	No word of the LORD to Jeremiah during his reign (see Jeremiah 1:1-3).	25, 26, 35, 36, 45	Only one reference: 22:24-30	24, 27-29, 32, 33, 37-39, 46-52

Additional Chapters

Gedaliah

Appointed Governor after the exile of Zedekiah

Chapters 40-42

In Egypt

Chapters 43-44

The ending of the Book of Jeremiah

52:31-34

A Proposed Order

Josiah	Jehoahaz/Shallum	Jehoiakim	Jehoiachin	Zedekiah
1 3:6	No word of the LORD to Jeremiah during his reign (see Jeremiah 1:1-3).	22:1-23 Fourth year: 26 25 36:1-7 45 Fifth Year: 36:8-32 Days of: 35	Only one reference: 22:24-30	Beginning of reign, either stated or demanded: 52:1-2 37:1-4 34:8-22 24 29 27 28 46-49 Fourth year: 50-51 Ninth Year: 39:1 52:3-4 37:10-16 38:14-27 39:15-18 Tenth Year: 32-33 34:1-7 Eleventh Year: 39:2-7 52:5-11 39:8-14 52:12-30

Additional Chapters

Gedaliah

Chapters 40:1-41:2; After his assassination – 41:3-43:3

In Egypt

43:4-44

The ending of the Book of Jeremiah

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Unassigned Chapters

2, 4-21, 23, 30-31