

# **Dr. Gary Yates, Jeremiah, Lecture 25, Jeremiah 30-33, Book of Consolation and the Aftermath of the Exile**

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This is Dr. Gary Yates in his teaching on the book of Jeremiah. This is session 25, Jeremiah 30-33, The Book of Consolation and the Aftermath of the Exile.

In our last section, we talked about the book of Consolation in Jeremiah 30 to 33.

And I hope that we were able to see in some sense the powerful promise of restoration, the beauty of God's grace, that after the fierce anger of the Lord has executed all of these judgments on Judah that Jeremiah describes for us, there's also this wonderful promise of restoration where the Lord is going to reverse the conditions of the past. Instead of exile, there's going to be security and blessing. Instead of weeping, there is going to be rejoicing.

Instead of there being no healing for the wound of Judah, there's going to be perfect healing and peace. And just a beautiful, one of the most beautiful pictures of God's grace and mercy, compassion, and all of scripture. We're going to continue looking in this session at Jeremiah 30 to 33, some of the specific promises that are given in the book of Consolation.

But we are also going to place this section of, or this group of chapters within the second half of the book of Jeremiah in chapters 26 to 45, and how it fits literarily into this larger part of scripture. Remember that that section as a whole is a story of the disobedience of Judah. The fact that they did not listen to the word of God.

And so how does this passage promise restoration, that in the future, the people will be able to obey the Lord, and that they will never again experience judgment? Why is it here? And how does it fit with the rest of this particular section of the book? In part, I think Jeremiah 30 to 33 owes its location in the book to the fact that the final writer and editor of this, Jeremiah Baruch, or whoever's responsible for the final form of the book, wants to highlight and emphasize the message of judgment. So, it's placed at the center.

It's placed in a prominent position. You have judgment on the front side of the book and judgment on the back side of the book. But remember to keep focused on the thing in the middle.

The ultimate resolution of the plot in the book of Jeremiah is that the Lord is going to restore the broken relationship. The unfaithful wife at the beginning of the book is

going to embrace the Lord as her husband and always be faithful to him when the Lord does his final work of restoration. The unfaithful rebellious son, who according to the law of Deuteronomy would deserve death, who refuses to acknowledge his sin, who refuses to come back to the Lord, who is confused to confess, and throughout the book is saying all the kinds of wrong things to God that God doesn't want to hear.

Ultimately, when he repents, he will say the right things and come to know and love the Lord in the way that he's designed. So, there's that aspect of that. But remember that in the second half of the book of Jeremiah, we have a Jehoiakim frame around the book that we've talked about or around this particular part of the book.

We have a panel in chapters 26 to 35 that gives us one section and show disobedience, rebellion, and the fact that Judah forfeited the opportunity to repent and be spared from judgment. At the end of this, the only people who experience life are the Rechabites, this obscure group. Jeremiah 30 to 33 is in that first panel.

It reminds us that even though in Jeremiah's life and ministry, there was only one small, obscure minority who experienced life, that group really has nothing to do with the long-term history of the nation of Israel. There's a promise within even that first panel, with all of this disobedience and rebellion, that the Lord is ultimately going to restore the people of Israel and fulfill the covenant promises that he's made to them. In Jeremiah's ministry during his life and times, the Rechabites are given a promise.

They will never lack a man to stand before the Lord. But what's really encouraging for the nation as a whole is that in Jeremiah chapter 33, within the book of Consolation, that same promise is given to David. David will never lack a man.

And the Levitical priests, the Levites, will never lack a man to stand before the Lord. That ultimately has huge national significance in a way that's not true of the Rechabites. We have a second panel in chapters 36 to 45.

Remember that the panel begins with the cutting up of Jeremiah's scroll. There's the possibility in the days of Jehoiakim, if the people will respond, if they will obey, if the leaders will turn to the Lord, then perhaps the Lord will relent before the Babylonian crisis is really burning and on the front burner. But Jehoiakim does not turn to the Lord.

The second half of the panel is going to make the same basic statement as the first. They forfeited the opportunity to experience national blessing. There's the judgment of the refugees in Egypt at the end of this section.

And the only promise of life and deliverance is given to one single individual, Baruch. But what we also have in the second panel of chapters 26 to 45 is that we have what happens in Judah in the aftermath of the exile. After the city of Jerusalem falls in chapter 39, what events take place in the life and ministry of Jeremiah from that point forward? Jeremiah's ministry does not end. The book of Jeremiah does not end with the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

Although in many ways that's the climactic event. Jeremiah's ministry appears to continue at least for several years after that. And we have a series of events in chapter 40 to 43 that give us the immediate aftermath of exile.

So, thinking about our Jehoiakim framework, thinking about the two panels that are in chapter 26 to 45, in some ways we can see a parallel and a correspondence between Jeremiah 30 to 33 and Jeremiah 40 to 43. The parallel in the correspondence though is one of extreme contrast. In chapter 30 to 33, we have the promise that the Lord will restore the fortunes of Israel.

Looking at the aftermath of exile and what God is ultimately going to do for the people, the blessings that they will experience sometime in the future when God brings about this restoration. However, what we have in chapters 40 to 43 is the immediate aftermath of exile. 30 to 33 is what God is ultimately going to do in that day and in the prophets in that day, in the last days, or in that future time.

When that is going to occur is left, you know, undetermined. But what we have in chapters 40 to 43 is while Jeremiah is still alive, what's going on in Judah in the immediate aftermath of exile? We have a picture of extreme contrast. Chapters 30 to 33 are going to picture this great blessing where the people come back to the Lord, where they're obedient to the Lord, where they experience all the blessings of living in the land.

That's not the picture that we see in chapters 40 to 43. The people are devastated by the exile. The poor people are basically the ones that are left there.

Instead of enjoying the blessings of the promised land, ultimately, they're going to go down to Egypt. Instead of being faithful and obedient to God, they're going to continue the disobedience that had brought about the judgment of exile in the first place. So, I think part of this two-panel structure in chapters 26 to 45, part of the purpose is to contrast the ultimate promises long term after exile in 30 to 33 with the short-term realities of what Jeremiah and the people are dealing with in the immediate aftermath of exile in chapters 40 to 43.

All right, now, to set the stage for this, I want to remind us, or focus a little bit more, building off of the last lecture on what are the specific things that in this future time of salvation, what are the specific promises that God gives to Israel? The first specific

promise that I'd like to highlight is that Jeremiah tells the people that God is going to bring them back to the land out of their exile, and they would rebuild the ruined cities that had been destroyed by the Babylonian armies. We have a picture of this rebuilding in chapter 30, verse 18. Thus says the Lord, behold, I will restore the fortunes.

There's that key expression for 30 to 33. I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob and I will have compassion on his dwellings. The city shall be rebuilt on its mound, and the palace shall stand where it used to be.

Out of them shall come songs of thanksgiving and the voices of those who celebrate. I will multiply them, and they will not be few. I will make them honored and they will not be small.

So, the people are going to be large and numerous, and one of the things that is going to cause them to rejoice is the Lord's bringing them back to the land. They're going to enjoy the abundance and prosperity of the land, and they are even going to be able to rebuild the cities and the walls that have been torn down by the Babylonians. In Chapter 31, verses 38 to 40, they are going to rebuild the city of Jerusalem itself and the entire city.

All of it is going to become holy and sacred to the Lord. You have these sinful places like the Valley of Hinnom and places that have been devoted to the worship of idols that God is going to turn into a dump for dead bodies because of the exile. But Jerusalem is going to be restored, and it's going to become holy to the Lord.

A second promise that I see highlighted as a theme in the book of Consolation is that the Lord is going to perform a work of salvation that can be described as a second exodus. In the beginning of Israel's history, the great act of redemption in the Old Testament is the exodus. God brings them out of bondage.

God takes them out of a foreign land and God brings them to the promised land. The pattern in God's work of salvation is going to be a pattern throughout salvation history where the Lord does numerous acts of deliverance and the return from exile and God's ultimate restoration of his people is going to be a second exodus. Now we see this in the book of Isaiah as well.

Just to set the stage, in the second half of Isaiah particularly, there's a focus on the fact that this second exodus is going to be so great that the people will even forget about the first exodus. This deliverance is going to be something even greater than what God did when he brought the people out of Egypt. Isaiah says that it's going to be a greater exodus than the first exodus for several reasons.

Number one, the Lord is not going to simply bring them out of Egypt or out of one country. The Lord is going to bring them out of multiple places where they have been taken as prisoners and exiles. The second thing that's going to make it a greater exodus is that the people will not need to leave Babylon in haste in the way that they did when they left Egypt.

Remember, they didn't even allow their bread to rise. So, they had to get out of there in a hurry. They will not have to do that in the second exodus.

The second exodus is going to be greater for a third reason. That fact is that the Lord is going to transform the wilderness into an oasis as they make pilgrimage back to the Holy Land. Remember that in the first exodus, they went out into the wilderness and there was a constant struggle with food and water.

They ended up eating manna for 38 years. What's going to happen in the second exodus is that the wilderness is going to be transformed into an oasis. There's going to be springs and water and food.

The people are going to be constantly provided for and taken care of. This is going to be an even greater deliverance than what they experienced in the past. Fourth, the second exodus will be even greater because the Lord will bring them back to the land and they will never ever be driven out of there again.

They'll be able to come back to worship and serve the Lord and to always enjoy the abundance of the promised land. That's Isaiah. The second exodus is going to be so great that the first exodus will not be remembered.

In many ways, Jeremiah is going to say exactly the same things. But notice some of the places where we see the second exodus motif, particularly in Jeremiah 30-33. The Lord says, 31 verse 2, the people who survived the sword, the survivors of exile, have found grace in the wilderness.

So, in the same way that the Lord brought the people of Israel through the wilderness in the first exodus, the Lord is going to give grace to them as they make their journey back to the promised land. When Israel sought rest, the Lord appeared to him from far away and said, I have loved you with an everlasting love, and therefore, I have continued my faithfulness to you. So, the reason that the Lord is going to show them grace in the wilderness again is that the Lord loves them with an everlasting love.

Even the sin that they have committed has not caused the Lord to turn away from that. Chapter 31, verses 8 and 9, says, Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth. Among them, the blind

and the lame, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together a great company, they shall return here.

So, the same thing that Isaiah says, the Lord's going to bring them from multiple countries. And even the lame and the crippled and the poor and the pregnant, God's going to care for all of the people and bring them back safely. Chapter 31, verse 11, For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, and he has redeemed him from the hands that are too strong for him.

So those theological terms, ransom and redeem, that are so important to the story of the Exodus, can also be applied to the return from exile because the Lord is going to act on behalf of his family and redeem them and bring them out of bondage. And that term redeemed is going to convey that. Chapter 31, verses 31 to 34, when the Lord promises the new covenant, he promises something greater than when he initially brought them out of the land of Egypt.

In chapter 32, Jeremiah is actually praying for the Lord to bring about the deliverance. One of the things that gives Jeremiah assurance that the Lord is going to keep his promises and do this great work on behalf of Israel and bring them back from exile is that he remembers what the Lord did for his people in the past. And what God has done for his people in the past is the assurance that God is going to keep his promises to the people in the future.

The ultimate act of salvation that Jeremiah focuses on in that passage is remembering what the Lord did for the people of Israel when they were in bondage in Egypt. So, a major theme and motif in the Book of Consolation is that God is going to bring about a second Exodus. Something else that I noticed is that a third prominent idea in the Book of Consolation is that the Lord is going to reunify the nation of Israel when he brings them back.

Now in the story of the Old Testament, the division between the Northern kingdom and the Southern kingdom is a painful reality for a couple of hundred years. And then ultimately from 722 to 586, Judah is basically going to be alone because the Northern kingdom is taken into captivity. Now, if we go back and look at the reasons why that division took place, there were both political and theological reasons.

The political reason is that Solomon's son Rehoboam was an idiot and made a very foolish political decision that led to a political fracture. But the theological reason was that God was punishing the apostasy of Solomon. He did not completely take away the kingdom that belonged to David, but he did greatly diminish it.

Well, that painful reality of the division between the North and the South is going to be completely healed when the Lord brings his people back in the future. In chapter 31, verses 27 and 28 say this, "'Behold, the days are coming,' declares the Lord, '"

"when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass that as I have watched over them to pluck them up and to break them down, to overthrow and to destroy." There are those verbs that are descriptive of Jeremiah's judgment.

"And bring them harm, so I will watch over them to build and to plant them back." The promises are given to both Israel and Judah. When God makes the new covenant, I will make a new covenant with both Israel and Judah. The tribes are going to be joined together, and they're going to experience this as a unified people.

One of the things you notice as you read the references to Israel and Jeremiah 30-33, there are often the names that are going to be used are Jacob or Ephraim or things that typically were associated more with the northern kingdom. That division is not going to exist in the future kingdom. Then, fourthly, and something that's hugely important in light of the covenant promises that God had made to Israel, the Book of Consolation promises that the Lord is going to raise up for Israel a new David.

In Jeremiah's life, the house of David had become so corrupt that the Lord was going to take them off the throne. The promise in Jeremiah and this is true in many of the prophetic books, is that there is going to be an ideal Davidic ruler in the future. Now, from their Old Testament perspective, they might not have understood that that's Jesus the Messiah, but they saw a restoration of the dynasty itself.

Or they saw that there was going to be an ideal Davidic ruler in the future who is going to be everything that God designed the Davidic king to be. When we get to the New Testament, Jesus is the fulfillment of that. Jesus becomes even a greater expression of that than maybe the Old Testament prophets could envision.

Jesus is not just the son of David, and he is also God himself. Jesus is not going to just be the ideal Davidic ruler, he is going to be the king who rules forever. He's not just going to reign from the throne in Jerusalem, he reigns literally from the right hand of God the Father.

But there's a promise in the book of Jeremiah and throughout the Old Testament prophets that God's going to restore the line of David. We see this in the book of Consolation in actually three specific places. Chapter 30, verses 8 and 9, it shall come to pass in that day, declares the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke off the neck and I will burst the bonds and foreigners shall no longer make a servant of him.

So, here's the reversal of what Jeremiah had talked about when he was wearing the yoke around Jerusalem and said, you're going to be in subjugation and bondage to Nebuchadnezzar. Now Hananiah, the false prophet, had tried to counter that message by smashing the yoke and really was offering an empty message of peace to the people. But the real hope is that one day, in God's timing, the yoke of bondage to

Babylon would be broken, and instead of being under that yoke of bondage, foreigners would no longer make a servant of Israel.

But verse 9 says, but they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. Ultimately, we know the fulfillment of that is Jesus—chapter 30, verse 21, a promise about the future ruler of Israel.

And it says in that passage the prince shall be one of themselves. Their ruler should come out of their midst. I will make him draw near and he shall approach me.

For who would dare of himself to approach me, declares the Lord. So, there's not a specific connection to David here, but he's going to be an Israelite. And he's going to have the privilege of being allowed to be in the presence of God.

That ultimately is fulfilled in Jesus as Messiah. Then chapter 33 verses 15 and 16, repeating a promise that's given to us for the first time in Jeremiah, back in chapter 23. And here's the description of the future Davidic ruler.

In those days and at that time, I will cause a righteous branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. Zedekiah as the final king in the Davidic line, his name was the Lord is my righteousness. He did not exactly live up to his name, but there is going to be a Zedek Samach, a righteous branch in the future who will live up to that name and who will be everything that God designed the house of David to be.

Again, Jesus as Messiah is the one who is going to fulfill that. All right. So those are some of the basic promises that go along with this.

Bring them back to the land, rebuild their cities, a second Exodus, a reunification of the North and the South, a new covenant where God would transform Israel so that they will obey him, and a new David. In this promise of the new covenant that's given in chapter 31 verses 31 and 34, remember what it says there, God is going to write the law on the hearts of his people. They will have the internal desire to obey him.

So, what's going to happen is this is going to break that cycle and history of disobedience that we see for hundreds and hundreds of years in the Old Testament. How did things go as Israel is living in the land during the time of Old Testament history? How did things go as far as being loyal to the Lord and faithful to his commandments? Very poorly. But what the Lord is going to do is he's going to transform the hearts of his people, he's going to give them a new heart so that they will obey him, and here's the possibility, here's what's going to come about as a result of this.



Jeremiah chapter 32, verses 39 and 40. They will be my people, I will be their God, I will give them one heart and one way that they may fear me forever. One of the problems with Jehoiakim earlier in the book, the reason that he didn't listen to God when he gave the warnings through the scroll, he didn't fear the Lord.

And he just cut the scroll up and said, I don't care what God says. The people in the future and their leaders are going to have a fear of God that will enable them to obey. That they may fear me forever for their own good and the good of their children after them, I will make them an everlasting covenant and I will not turn away from doing good to them as I put the fear of me in their hearts. So permanently, they will enjoy God's blessing.

There will never ever again be an exile because there's not going to be a need for exile because they will be permanently loyal, faithful, and obedient to God. So that's, those are the basic promises of the Book of Restoration chapters 30 to 33. Our response and our reaction to this is, wow, this is great.

When do we get there? And you can imagine, as we turn to Jeremiah 40 to 43, remembering the fall of the city in chapter 39; how long is it going to be until we experience the blessings of salvation? Remember, Jeremiah had said the exile is going to last for 70 years. So, what we see in chapters 40 to 43, and sometimes in some very clear contrast being set up with the book of consolation, the time of, it looks like there's a possible restoration that begins, but the disappointing thing is that really the fall of Jerusalem is not the end of judgment. You would think, well, maybe the people have finally learned their lesson.

The city has fallen. Many of them have been taken away. All that's left is the poor in the land.

Well, that got their attention, and they turned back to God. But what we see are the conditions really of judgment and disobedience are going to continue. And there is a huge contrast between the blessings that are promised in 30 to 33 and the reality that is being lived out in chapters 40 to 43.

Remember that key promise: the Lord is going to transform Israel when he establishes a new covenant so that they will always be able to obey him and follow him, and they'll never turn away; they'll never have to be punished for their sin again. It looks like as we get into Jeremiah 40, Gedaliah is appointed governor. There's not a king on the throne, but Gedaliah from the family of Shaphan, who's been a supporter of Jeremiah all throughout his ministry, becomes the governor of Judah.

And it looks like we begin to see kind of a minor return. And we almost wonder, well, wow, this looks like the incipient form, at least of Jeremiah chapters 30 to 33. Listen

to what it says in Jeremiah 40 verse eight, Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, swore to them and to their men saying, do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans, dwell in the land, serve the king of Babylon, and it will be well for you.

Okay, same thing Jeremiah has been taught. And Jeremiah sort of disappears here in chapters 40 and 41, and Gedaliah takes his place and says, look, if you'll serve the Babylonians, things will go well for you, we'll be prosperous, we'll be successful. And he says in verse 10, as for me, I will dwell at Mitzpah to represent you before the Chaldeans who will come to us.

But as for you, gather wine and summer fruits and oil and store them in your vessels and dwell in your cities that you've taken. So, in an incipient way, the abundance, the blessing, the prosperity of the restoration in 30 to 33, Gedaliah wants them to enjoy that and to experience that even though this is just in the short period, in the short time right after the fall of Jerusalem has taken place. So, is this the beginning of the restoration in 30 to 33? I think that's kind of where the narrator is taking us.

But the reality is, is that this section from chapters 40 to 43, instead of it being characterized by the law of God is written on the hearts of the people, there are going to be two specific acts of disobedience to God. And so, in the same way, that the people were disobeying God before the fall of Jerusalem, they're just as disobedient to the word of God and especially to the prophetic word of Jeremiah afterward. So, this can't be the restoration.

The law of God definitely, at this point, has not been written on the hearts of people because they're still doing the same things that brought the judgment in the first place. The first act of disobedience is that Gedaliah, the governor has been appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, and God has given authority to Nebuchadnezzar, so God is the one who appointed Gedaliah, Gedaliah is assassinated. In chapter 40, verse 9, Gedaliah, as sort of the replacement for Jeremiah in that section, says, submit to Babylon.

And if you will put yourself under Babylonian hegemony, recognize that God has given authority to the Babylonians at this point, things will go well for you. So we hear the same thing, Gedaliah is basically saying the same thing that remember Jeremiah had been saying to Zedekiah in the days right before the fall of Jerusalem. Submit to Babylon, put yourself under their yoke; if you will surrender and submit to Babylon, recognize that they are the authority that God has put in place here, things will go well for you, and your life will be spared.

Zedekiah didn't listen to the word of God and experienced judgment as a result of that. Gedaliah says, submit to Babylon, things will go well for you, and it looks like at the beginning, that's what they're going to experience. He tells them to harvest the

fruits, bring in the crops, the Lord's blessing us, and we even begin to see refugees and exiles returning to the land.

Verse 11, likewise when all the Judeans who were in Moab and among the Ammonites and in Edom and in the other lands heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah and had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam as governor over them, then they returned from those places. So, what had chapters 30 to 33, chapters 30 to 33 promised that the Lord was going to bring them back to the land? This is all going on and wow, is this the beginning? But all of this changes in chapter 41 when Gedaliah is assassinated by a man named Ishmael. And the ironic thing is, is that Ishmael is from the house of David.

And so, this incipient blessing that if you'll submit to Babylon and obey, things will go well. There's a direct act of disobedience by the assassination of God. The law of God has not been written on, they are still rebellious against God and God's plan and God's design. The second act of disobedience is that in chapters 42 to 43, we have the story of a military contingent led by a man named Johanan coming to Jeremiah, and they are asking the prophet what they should do in the aftermath of this assassination.

I mean, when the Babylonians respond to the fact that this insurgent group has put to death the governor that they've appointed, they're going to come back and wreak more havoc on the land. They're going to find out, you know, we couldn't trust Judah any more than before we destroyed the city of Jerusalem. We've still got problems with them and so we're going to have to deal with this.

And so their plan, the plan of Johanan and his group is that they are going to flee to Egypt. And by leaving the land, the promised land, they feel that that will give them security. They're going to be able to flee from Babylonian reprisals for the assassination of Gedaliah.

So, they come to Jeremiah, and in chapter 42, a couple of interesting things, they say, pray for us and tell us what we do, and whatever the Lord tells us that we should do, we'll do that. We'll be obedient to it. So they express a willingness to follow the Lord, and again, it's like, wow, is this the beginning of 30 to 33, maybe? Because they have the desire to follow and obey God.

Jeremiah says I will pray for you. Ironic in light of the fact that the prophet is no longer under this edict from God where he's not allowed to pray for the people. He agrees to intercede for them.

You know, they can experience blessing here. And he says, I'll come back with you a word from the Lord. What does God want you to do? When Jeremiah comes back to them, however, he says, here's what the Lord told me.

Stay in the land. Look, don't worry about going down to Egypt. You're not going to be any more secure there than you are trusting God and doing what God tells you to do.

Submit to Babylon. Things will go well for you. And if you remember what happens there, Johanan and his party refuse to do what Jeremiah said initially, we'll do whatever the Lord says.

And then, as soon as the Lord gives them a message through the prophet, they disobey and turn away. And really, they react in the same way that the people did before the fall of Jerusalem. Jeremiah, you're telling us a lie.

You're telling us to submit to Babylon because you and Baruch are traitors, and you're trying to sell us out to the Babylonians. And it tells us in chapter 43, verses one to seven, that they entered Egypt in disobedience to the word of the Lord, and they took Jeremiah and Baruch with them. So, we have a definite contrast between 30 and 33 and 40 and 43.

In 30 to 33, God says, I'm going to write the law in the hearts of my people. They will obey me. They will follow me.

They will always do what I tell them to do. Chapters 40 to 43, what we see going on there, there are two specific acts of disobedience against God. And even though God was prepared to bless them and even though God had prepared a way for them to be blessed, they're going to forfeit that blessing because the same disobedience that characterized the people before the fall of Jerusalem is true of the people post 586 as well.

Two specific acts of disobedience, the assassination of Gedaliah in chapter 41, and the flight of the Jews to Egypt in chapter 43. So, we're still in the same hopeless situation that we saw before the judgment of 586 took place. Now, the second thing that provides a pretty obvious contrast between 30 to 33 and 40 to 43 is that, remember, one of the motifs describing salvation is that God is going to do a new exodus, and God is going to bring about a second exodus and a deliverance where he brings the people out of captivity that's going to be even greater than the first one.

Basically, what we have in chapters 40 to 43, however, is that we see a reversal of the exodus because instead, the people start coming back to the land in chapter 40 under the reign of Gedaliah or under the rule of Gedaliah. But in 43, 1 to 7, what do Johanan and his party do? They go back to Egypt. Jeremiah, from what we can tell, concludes and finishes his ministry in Egypt outside of the land.

As a second Moses, Jeremiah lives through, in some sense, the reversal of the exodus. Deuteronomy 28 verse 68 said that one of the covenant curses that God

would bring about on his people if they disobeyed him is that he would put them on ships and he would send them back to Egypt. Literally, in Jeremiah's life, he doesn't get on the ship, but he does end up being sent back to Egypt.

We have the reversal of salvation history. Within the context of Jeremiah 26 to 45, we have the exact opposite of what is promised in the book of Consolation. Chapters 30 to 33 give us a promise of a new exodus.

Chapters 40 to 43 depict for us the reality of no exodus. So, there's a very obvious contrast here. And then, finally, something that I want to develop in a little more detail is that the Book of Consolation said that God is going to raise up a new David for Israel.

And the people are going to serve David, their king. They're not going to serve the foreign oppressors anymore. The Lord is going to raise up a righteous branch.

So, the covenant promises that God has made to the house of Israel are going to be fulfilled. God is going to keep his covenant with David, and the Lord is going to raise up a new David. But I want to remind us of the representative of the house of David that we have in chapters 40 to 43.

His name is Ishmael. Ishmael is a member of the royal family who ultimately assassinates Gedaliah and really brings about more judgment. So, in chapters 30 to 33, we're looking forward to a new David who's going to be a righteous branch and will lead the people in the right direction.

In chapters 40 to 43, what we really have in the immediate aftermath of exile is we have another Davidite who's just like the ones that God had brought judgment against. A scholar by the name of Applegate says that the actions of Ishmael when he assassinates Gedaliah complete the picture of the house of David's inimical opposition to Yahweh's purposes in both Babylonian supremacy and Judean restoration. So instead of the house of David facilitating restoration and the house of David bringing blessings to the people, the house of David is going to bring more judgment, more bondage, more violence, and more disaster.

We definitely are not in a situation where the Lord is going to raise up a righteous branch. In the immediate aftermath of exile, the key representative of the house of David is just as corrupt as the last kings of Judah that we read about in Jeremiah 22. Men like Jehoiakim that did not listen to the Lord, men like Zedekiah that did not pay attention to the command to submit to Babylon.

And I believe that Ishmael acts to bring about the assassination of Gedaliah. This is his failed attempt to restore what God would ultimately have to bring about. He wants to bring the house of David back into power.

That is only going to happen when it's done God's way. Now as I've studied the Old Testament, I've come to just deeply appreciate the beauty and the artistry and the sophistication of the stories. And one of the things that impresses me with chapter 40 to 43, in some ways this is kind of an incidental footnote in the history of the Old Testament.

A lot of people who maybe know the Bible really well or have read the Old Testament for many years don't necessarily know about Ishmael and Gedaliah. But what the narrator does is that in several interesting ways, the narrator is going to portray the story of Ishmael and Gedaliah in light of the better-known story of Saul and David. Remember what happens with Saul and David.

Saul is God's anointed ruler who is replaced by David. And then these promises are given to the house of David that they will rule forever. We have a change of dynasty from Saul to David.

Well, remember what's happened in Jeremiah's ministry is that we have a change of administration. The house of David has been God's vice-regent. They have been the servant of the Lord who executed God's rule on earth.

In Jeremiah's ministry, the role of supremacy, that role of hegemony, that role of rulership, and being God's representative has been given to Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar is now God's servant and God's anointed ruler. When we read in chapter 40, verse 5, verse 7, verse 11, chapter 41, verse 2, and 41.10, that Gedaliah as governor was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, Gedaliah is God's appointed ruler.

There has been a change of administration in the same way that there was in the days of Saul and David. It's natural that the narrator would go back to that story and present the change that's taking place in Jeremiah's day. Here's the interesting part though, is that it is Gedaliah in this story who becomes the new David.

And ironically, it is Ishmael who, as a member of the house of David, acts in many ways that remind us of Saul. All right, so let's think about some of the parallels. How do chapters 40 and 41, specifically, remind us of the story of David and Saul? Well, remember that when Gedaliah becomes the governor, it tells us that the Jews and the Israelites who have been refugees in places like Moab, Ammon, and Edom begin to come back to the land.

Those are the places where when David becomes king, he begins to establish his authority and begins to subjugate them and establish his kingdom. It tells us in chapter 40, verse 7, that Gedaliah, who is this new David, is anointed at Mizpah. Very interesting.

That's the place back in 1 Samuel chapter 10, where Saul is first anointed as king. Now, Ishmael, as he's carrying out this conspiracy and conspires to put Gedaliah to death, seems to be inspired in some way by the offer of support by Baelus, who is the king of the Ammonites. And ultimately, when Ishmael's got to run away from Judah and flee, he's going to go to the Ammonites.

Well, 2 Samuel chapter 10, verses 1 to 3 is going to remind us that in the early days of his kingdom, David had close ties with the Ammonites. All right. So, there's by places and names and geography, we're already hearing some echoes of the Saul and the David story.

All right. Now, I think there are actually some other things that developed this a little bit further. Let me just mention a couple.

Gedaliah, before he is put to death, hears news that there's a conspiracy on the part of Ishmael and that Ishmael takes his life. Gedaliah refuses to act on that. In some way, I'm reminded of the fact that David, as he's involved in this huge conflict with Saul and remembers running and fleeing from Saul, has opportunities to take Saul's life, but he refuses to do so.

In some way, Gedaliah refuses to act against Ishmael. But in this particular story, it's the Davidite, Ishmael, who has no problem stretching out his hand and doing violence to the Lord's anointed. David, as a man of honor, would not touch the Lord's anointed.

He would not touch Saul when he had the opportunity. Ishmael is nothing like David because the Lord has appointed Gedaliah, and Ishmael puts him to death. Now, Ishmael, after he assassinates Gedaliah, he's not finished with his violence.

It tells us in chapter 41, verses four to nine, that he additionally murdered 70 pilgrims that had come from the North, apparently to worship the Lord and to offer support to Gedaliah. He actually tricks them, deceives them, and tells them that he will take them to Gedaliah. And in light of what's happened to Gedaliah, it's ironic that he says that.

He murders them and throws their bodies in the well. And it seems like the only reason that he does this is that he believes they are supporters of Gedaliah. The heinous, violent murder of people who have come to worship the Lord might in some way remind us of the fact that in his conflict with David, Saul had murdered 85 priests whom he believed were conspiring against him.

Finally, Ishmael, the last thing that we begin to see about him is that Ishmael is going to take action to try to get away and escape after he has committed this heinous

crime. It tells us in chapter 41 verse 10, that he takes hostages and captives. It includes the king's daughters and he is going to run and flee to Ammon.

One of the last events that we read about before the death of Saul in 1 Samuel is that David has family members kidnapped, and David and his men have to go and rescue them. But now it's a member of the house of David who has done the kidnapping and has taken away wife and family members from other people, and it's Johanan and the military officers who have to go and capture this member of the house of David who is about to lead his people into exile. Ishmael, as a Davidite, is not bringing about restoration.

In fact, he's taking people into exile. He looks more like a Nebuchadnezzar than a David. So, all of these things are showing us that the house of David is still in big trouble.

The only representative in the line of David during this time in the aftermath of 40-43 is not the righteous branch that God had promised for the future. It's just a guy who is bad news. The place where Johanan and the military officers are going to rescue Ishmael's kidnapped victims is at the pool of Gibeon.

Again, going back to the story of David and Saul in 2 Samuel chapter 2, this is the place where Abner and Joab decide to have 12 representatives of the family of the men of David and 12 representatives of the men of Saul. They fight. All of them are killed, and then ultimately, David's men defeat Saul, and Saul and his men have to flee out of the country.

But now, in this passage, after a defeat at the pool of Gibeon, it's a member of the house of David that is having... So, we see that the house of David, that the people of Judah are still under a sentence of judgment, and that the promise of restoration that God has given to his people is not going to be experienced in the near future. The pattern of sin and of people not listening to the word of the Lord that we have seen throughout Jeremiah's ministry is going to continue even after the fall of Jerusalem. The people haven't really learned their lesson.

All of this becomes a huge lesson for the people in exile because the people in Babylonian exile have been given the promise that, ultimately, they are the good figs that the Lord will restore and bring back to the land. But what this is reminding them is that a promise is not an automatic guarantee. Jeremiah 29, verse 11 to verse 14, says, the Lord will restore them when they turn to the Lord, and they seek them with all their hearts.

So, the Lord has given a promise of restoration to the exiles that are in Babylon, but it's not an automatic thing. They will have to turn to God and when they turn to God and when they are obedient to God and when they humble themselves and repent of



their past, that's when they will be blessed. The people who lived in the land in the immediate aftermath of exile did not experience the blessing that God had for them because there were two gigantic acts of disobedience that were continued from the past and that continue to reflect the house of David and their opposition to God.

Let me mention one more important parallelism as we're looking at Jeremiah 26 to 45 and thinking specifically about the contrast between restoration in 30 to 33 and the judgment that's occurring in chapters 40 to 43. We've seen that various types of narrative parallelism are very important to the way that the narrator tells the story of the people's continued disobedience to the word of the Lord. One of the other types of parallelism that's going to continue to make this point about their recurring and repeated sin is that in specific ways, the narrator is going to describe sins that occur in chapters 40 to 43 in ways that very directly remind us of acts of disobedience before the fall of Jerusalem at other places in the Jeremiah narratives.

First of all, let's think about this. In chapter 26, Jehoiakim kills the prophet Uriah with a sword. In chapter 41, it is Ishmael as a member of the house of David who kills with a sword and he executes Gedaliah.

When Jehoiakim commits this terrible murder by killing a prophet, it says that he dumps his body in a common burial place. When Ishmael kills the 70 men who have come to worship from the northern kingdom, and it's just a heinous, treacherous act, he dumps their bodies in a well or a cistern. In chapter 38, when the military officials did not like the fact that Jeremiah was discouraging the war effort, they threw him in a well, a cistern, the Hebrew word bor. Ishmael dumps the 70 bodies into a cistern, a bor, chapter 41, verse 7. In the days immediately before the fall of Jerusalem, Zedekiah turned to Egypt for help.

He believed that if Egypt could get involved in all of this, maybe it would relieve the pressure, and maybe the Babylonians would go away. That didn't work. Jeremiah said, look, even if all that's left of the Egyptians are some wounded soldiers, they would still be able to defeat you.

In the aftermath of exile, in chapters 42 and 43, Johanan and his officers go down to Egypt because they believe that Egypt is their source of security. It didn't work for Zedekiah, and it didn't work for Johanan. When the military officers in Jeremiah 38 when reject his message of surrender to Babylon, their claim is Jeremiah is a traitor.

He's defecting over to the Babylonians. He's weakening the war effort. When Johanan and the military officers hear Jeremiah's advice that they're to stay in the land and submit to the king of Babylon, they say, you're a liar.

They accuse him of Sheker, the same thing that Jeremiah has said about the message of the false prophets. And they go along and they add to that, they say, you're telling

us to stay here because Baruch, now they're blaming Baruch, Baruch is trying to sell us out to the Babylonians. So, what we see throughout the Old Testament is a frustrating history of continued disobedience to the Lord.

What we see in the book of Jeremiah is a frustrating history of disobedience before the fall of Jerusalem, the people did not listen to the word of the Lord. After the fall of Jerusalem, the people did not listen to the word of the Lord. They continue to commit the same sins.

And so we end up in Jeremiah 26 to 45 with a powerful contrast. The hope of the restoration that will occur in those days is the reality of what is happening in the immediate aftermath of exile. And again, the issue is going to be the response to the word of the Lord.

The Lord has promised that there will be restoration. The Lord has promised that there will be blessing for Israel. The Lord has promised that the exiles are the ones who are the good fix.

And I know the plans that I have for you, the plans to give you a hope and a future, but the history of how this is going to work out is going to be very complicated and complex. They will not experience this deliverance until they seek the Lord and turn to him with a whole heart. One writer writing on the book of Jeremiah comments on the theological idea of the unending exile.

Jeremiah prophesied that the return to the land would occur in 70 years. But we get the idea as we read this that the actual restoration of Israel, what's envisioned in chapters 30 to 33, may not happen until a long time after that, even as well. We come to Daniel chapter nine, and I'll close with this as a final reflection on this section.

In Daniel chapter nine, Daniel, as the days of captivity are drawing to an end, reads the prophecies of Jeremiah that the exile would last for 70 years. He knows that the time of their return is at hand. And so, he begins to pray that God would fulfill his covenant promises.

He doesn't take it as an immediate guarantee that this is automatically going to happen no matter what. It will happen when we seek God, when we turn to him. He confesses the sins of the people and prays for God to fulfill his promise.

But in response to that prayer, God gives him another vision. And God elaborates further on the timing of the restoration. And he says, Daniel, 70 weeks of seven years are decreed for Israel.

They will come back to the land in 70 years. But the time when God is going to fully restore them, where God is going to put an end to transgression and renew the covenant with his people, will not occur until this distant time in the future. Israel would not experience the blessings of salvation until they sought God with all of their heart.

We can see that in Jeremiah itself. It's not just a foreign idea imposed upon us in Daniel. We see that in the contrast laid out in the book of Jeremiah, the promises of chapters 30 to 33 and the reality of what is going on in the days after the exile in chapters 40 to 43.

This is Dr. Gary Yates in his teaching on the book of Jeremiah. This is session 25, Jeremiah 30-33, The Book of Consolation and the Aftermath of the Exile.