

Dr. Gary Yates, Jeremiah, Session 15, Jeremiah 11-20, Confessions of the Prophet Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Yates, Jeremiah, Session 15, Jeremiah as Prophet, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Gary Yates' lecture analyzes Jeremiah's confessions (Jeremiah 11-20), framing them within the context of Israel's broken covenant with God. The lecture emphasizes that Jeremiah's prayers shift from intercession, a traditional prophetic role exemplified by Moses and Samuel, to lamentations reflecting God's withdrawn mercy. This shift highlights God's intense emotional response—both wrathful judgment and profound grief—toward Israel's unrepentant sin. Yates argues that Jeremiah's suffering mirrors God's own pathos, illustrating God's passionate engagement with his people's actions and consequences. Ultimately, the lecture explores the complex interplay between God's justice and compassion in the face of covenant betrayal.

**2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Yates, Jeremiah, Session 15 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Major Prophets → Jeremiah).**



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3. Yates, Jeremiah, Session 15, Jeremiah 11-20, Confessions of the Prophet

Jeremiah's Confessions: A Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What is the central theme of Jeremiah's confessions in chapters 11-20, according to Dr. Yates?
2. How does God's command to Jeremiah to not pray for the people contrast with the roles of other prophets like Moses and Samuel?
3. How does Dr. Yates describe God's emotional response to the sins of Israel as revealed in the book of Jeremiah?
4. According to the lecture, what does Jeremiah's role as the "weeping prophet" signify beyond his personal sadness?
5. Why, despite confessing their sins, does God reject the people's prayers in chapter 14?
6. What is the significance of God's statement in Jeremiah 15:1, where He says even Moses and Samuel could not turn His heart toward the people?
7. How do Jeremiah's prayers shift from intercession for the people to imprecation against them?
8. How does Dr. Yates interpret the passages where it's difficult to discern if the speaker is God, Jeremiah, or the people?
9. What does the lecture suggest about the relationship between God's anger and grief as seen in the book of Jeremiah?
10. How does the concept of God's impassibility relate to the portrayal of God in Jeremiah, according to the lecture?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Dr. Yates argues that Jeremiah's confessions in chapters 11-20 are not just personal expressions but also a message to Israel about the broken covenant, reflecting both their sin and God's response to it. The confessions are a lament over the broken covenant between God and Israel.

2. Unlike Moses and Samuel, whose intercessions turned away God's judgment, Jeremiah is told *not* to pray for the people, signifying the unalterable nature of God's judgment due to the severity of the covenant's violation. God has closed the door on repentance.
3. Dr. Yates describes God's emotional response as a complex mix of anger and grief, emphasizing that God experiences pain over the destruction of His people. God is not a stoic deity but is deeply invested in the fate of his people.
4. Jeremiah's tears are an expression of the pain and grief of God himself. Jeremiah isn't just sensitive; he is embodying and communicating God's feelings of brokenness.
5. Despite confessing, God rejects the people's prayers because their words are not accompanied by genuine repentance and a turning away from their sins. They are giving lip service but continuing to sin.
6. God's statement about Moses and Samuel highlights the severity of the situation and emphasizes that the time for repentance and intercession has passed. The judgment is final and absolute and cannot be averted even by the great prophets of the past.
7. Jeremiah's prayers shift from intercession to imprecation because he recognizes the people's complete rejection of God and their deserved judgment. The role of the prophet changes due to the broken covenant.
8. Dr. Yates suggests that in these passages, the speaker can be interpreted as both God and Jeremiah, as Jeremiah has become an expression of God's heart and feelings about the people. There is an intermingling of the human and divine.
9. The lecture illustrates that God's anger and grief are not mutually exclusive. God's anger is rooted in the people's sin and betrayal, while His grief stems from the pain of having to judge them.
10. The lecture argues that the idea of an impassible God does not align with the portrayal in Jeremiah, where God is shown experiencing a range of emotions, particularly grief over the suffering of his people. The lecture calls this idea into question.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Answer the following essay questions thoroughly, referencing the source material.

1. Analyze the significance of the broken covenant in Jeremiah 11-20, explaining how it impacts both the relationship between God and Israel and the role of prophetic intercession, as presented in Dr. Yates' lecture.
2. Discuss the concept of God's pathos as demonstrated in the book of Jeremiah, exploring how the lecture balances the portrayal of God as a God of wrath and a God of compassion.
3. Compare and contrast the roles of Moses, Samuel, and Jeremiah in relation to their intercessions for the people of Israel, focusing on how the changing circumstances impacted the effectiveness of those intercessions.
4. Evaluate the significance of Jeremiah's confessions and laments, both as personal expressions of a prophet and as reflections of the character and emotions of God. Consider the ways in which Jeremiah's suffering mirrors God's pain.
5. Explore the complex relationship between repentance and God's response, as presented in Jeremiah 14 and 15, analyzing why even genuine-sounding confessions might not be enough to avert divine judgment.

Glossary

Apostasy: The abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief. In this context, it refers to Israel's turning away from Yahweh to other gods.

Covenant: A sacred agreement between God and his people, outlining terms of relationship and promises.

Imprecation: A curse or invocation of evil or harm upon someone; in the context of Jeremiah, his prayers shift to wishing for judgment on Israel.

Impassibility: A theological concept asserting that God is incapable of experiencing emotions or suffering because he is wholly other and separate from his creation.

Intercession: The act of pleading or praying on behalf of others; it is a major function of a prophet in the Old Testament.

Pathos: A quality that evokes pity or sadness. In this context, it refers to the way that God experiences and expresses pain and grief in relation to his people.

Prophetic Intercession: A prophet's role in praying to God for the people in an attempt to turn away judgment.

The Weeping Prophet: A title given to Jeremiah, recognizing his deep grief and lament over the fate of his people; he is not just sad, but represents the grief of God.

4. Briefing Document

Okay, here's a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Gary Yates's lecture on Jeremiah 11-20:

Briefing Document: Jeremiah's Confessions and the Pathos of God

Source: Excerpts from "Yates_Jer_En_Lecture15.pdf"

Overview: This lecture by Dr. Gary Yates focuses on Jeremiah's "confessions" or laments in Jeremiah 11-20, arguing that they are not just personal expressions of grief but also reflect the broken covenant between God and Israel and reveal God's own pathos (suffering). The lecture challenges traditional notions of God's immutability, highlighting his emotional engagement with his people's choices and their consequences.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. The Broken Covenant:

- The core issue is Judah's covenant unfaithfulness. God charges them with going after other gods (Jer. 11:10). This breach of covenant leads to the announced judgment and the covenant curses.
- The covenant was broken by the people of Israel: "The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their fathers."
- God's judgment is a direct consequence of this broken covenant, and it is described as an inescapable disaster (Jer. 11:11).

1. The Cessation of Prophetic Intercession:

- God explicitly forbids Jeremiah from praying for the people (Jer. 7:16, 11:14, 14:11). This is a shocking departure from the typical role of a prophet, who traditionally interceded for the people, like Moses and Samuel.
- The lecture highlights the contrast with Moses (Exodus 32, Numbers 14) and Samuel (1 Samuel 7, 12), whose intercessions turned away God's judgment.
- Dr. Yates states: "The Lord says, you're not to pray for these people." The implication is that the covenant is so broken, the people so hardened in their sin, that even a prophet's intercession would no longer change God's decision.

- Dr. Yates says, "For a prophet not to pray for the people that's the ultimate sin. So, in a sense, it's a strange thing that God is coming to Jeremiah and saying, look, don't fulfill your prophetic role. Don't intercede for this people."
- This cessation of intercession signals a closing down of the opportunity for repentance and a hardening of God's stance towards Judah.
- God's rejection of Jeremiah's prayers shows the seriousness of the broken covenant - it's not just a broken relationship but a breakdown in the very act of prophetic intercession.

1. **God's Emotional Involvement (Pathos):**

- The lecture emphasizes that the book of Jeremiah portrays a God who is not detached or impassible. God deeply feels the pain of Judah's betrayal.
- Dr. Yates states, "...there's also a God who comes into time, interacts with people, deals with them in real history and in real give-and-take relationships. And so, the prayers of God's prophets ultimately, at times, changed the direction of God's actions."
- The lecture challenges the notion of God's immutability (unchangeability) as a cold, detached characteristic, arguing instead that God is involved in a real give-and-take relationship with his people and reacts to their actions.
- God's emotional experience, even anger, isn't a flaw, but a response to the depth of the covenant betrayal.
- Jeremiah's grief reflects God's grief. The lecture suggests that God's pain is expressed through Jeremiah's lament. "In a sense, Jeremiah is representing, through his tears, the tears of God." The idea is that Jeremiah is becoming a living example of God's suffering and pain to the people.
- Dr. Yates poses the question, "Is it God, or is it the prophet?" and concludes, "It's both." This reinforces the idea that Jeremiah embodies and expresses God's feelings, not just his own.

1. **Jeremiah as a Mediator and Representative of God's Grief:**

- Jeremiah's role is not just to deliver God's word but to also embody God's emotions towards the people. He represents both God's anger and Israel's sinfulness.

- Dr. Yates quotes Andrew Sheed, who describes Jeremiah as a “mediator” between God and Israel, embodying both the wrath of God and the pain of Israel.
- Jeremiah's laments and imprecations are not solely his own, but also represent God's own feelings of pain and anger at the broken covenant.
- Jeremiah's role has shifted. Instead of interceding *for* the people, he now prays against them, reflecting the shattered state of the covenant.

1. **The Ineffectiveness of Empty Repentance:**

- Even when the people come to God with seemingly contrite confessions, God rejects their prayers because their hearts have not changed (Jeremiah 14:1-9, 14:19-22)
- Dr. Yates points out that while the people's confession might seem good on the surface, they do not restrain their feet from their sin.
- God makes it clear that he will remember their iniquity and punish their sin, indicating the lack of true repentance.
- The lecture makes the point that true repentance isn't about using the right words; it must be accompanied by a genuine change of heart and behavior.

1. **The Reversal of Covenant Blessings:**

- The lecture uses the imagery of the Abrahamic covenant, where God promised to make Israel's descendants as numerous as the sand on the seashore. In contrast, God now says he will make their widows more numerous than the sand on the seashore, showing the brokenness of the covenant and the reversal of its blessings (Jeremiah 15:8).

Key Quotes:

- "They have gone after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their fathers." (Jeremiah 11:10)
- "Therefore do not pray for these people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them, for I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their trouble." (Jeremiah 11:14)
- "The Lord said to me: “Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind would not be favorable toward this people. Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth.” (Jeremiah 15:1)

- "Through the confessions of Jeremiah, we're not only given insight into the character of the prophet. We're also provided revelation into the character and the nature of God himself."

Implications:

- The lecture challenges a simplistic view of God as an emotionless, unchanging being.
- It highlights the relational nature of God, showing that He is deeply affected by the choices of His people and the state of the covenant relationship.
- It emphasizes the seriousness of sin and the consequences of breaking covenant with God.
- It encourages a deeper understanding of the emotional and passionate character of God as revealed in the Old Testament, specifically in the book of Jeremiah.

Conclusion:

Dr. Yates' lecture on Jeremiah's confessions provides a profound exploration of God's character and the complexities of his relationship with Israel. By emphasizing the broken covenant, the cessation of intercession, and the pathos of God, the lecture offers a richer, more emotionally resonant reading of Jeremiah 11-20. It encourages us to recognize God's deep emotional engagement with his people, even in judgment, and reminds us that true repentance must come from a transformed heart.

5. FAQs on Yates, Jeremiah, Session 15, Jeremiah 11-20, Confessions of the Prophet, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Jeremiah's Confessions and the Pathos of God

1. **Why are Jeremiah's confessions in chapters 11-20 so significant?** Jeremiah's confessions in these chapters go beyond personal lament. They reflect the broken covenant between God and Israel, showcasing the futility of prayer when the people are unrepentant. These confessions demonstrate not just a personal struggle but a shift in the prophetic role itself, moving from intercession for the people to embodying God's judgment against them. They also unveil the profound grief of God over the people's sins.
2. **How did the prophetic role of intercession change in Jeremiah's time compared to prophets like Moses and Samuel?** Prophets like Moses and Samuel successfully interceded for Israel, persuading God to relent from punishment. However, in Jeremiah's time, God explicitly forbade Jeremiah from interceding for the people. This indicates that the people's sin and unfaithfulness had reached a point where even the most fervent prayers would not avert God's judgment. The prophetic role shifted from one of seeking mercy to one of representing God's righteous anger and grief.
3. **Why does God tell Jeremiah not to pray for the people of Judah?** God tells Jeremiah not to pray for the people because they have repeatedly broken the covenant, turned to idols, and refused to repent. God states that their hearts remain unrepentant even when they offer prayers and confessions. Because their repentance is not genuine, their judgment is unavoidable. This directive reflects the closing down of opportunities for repentance and God's unyielding justice.
4. **How do Jeremiah's prayers shift during this period?** Instead of praying for God to deliver the people as other prophets did, Jeremiah begins to pray against them, asking God to judge them for their rebellion. This reflects the change in the prophetic role and the severity of Judah's sin. Jeremiah's imprecations against his own people are a sign that the covenant is broken beyond repair.

5. In what ways does Jeremiah's suffering represent the suffering of God?

Jeremiah's pain, tears, and grief are not merely his own. They are an expression of God's deep emotional response to the people's sins and the coming destruction. God uses Jeremiah as an instrument to convey his own grief and heartache over the broken relationship with Israel. It becomes hard to discern if it is the prophet or God speaking, emphasizing the shared emotional burden.

6. What does the back-and-forth between anger and grief reveal about God in the book of Jeremiah? The back-and-forth between God's anger and grief reveals a God who is deeply passionate and emotionally involved with his creation. He is not just a God of wrath; he is a God whose heart is broken by the sin and suffering of his people. This challenges the idea of an impassible God by highlighting God's capacity for profound love, pain, and sadness. He grieves for the destruction of the very people he loves.

7. How do the people's confessions in chapter 14 fail to move God to compassion?

Despite the people's eloquent confessions of sin and dependence on God in chapter 14, their lack of genuine repentance is apparent. They confess with their mouths but have not "restrained their feet" by truly turning away from their sins. They offer the right words but their actions show their continued pursuit of rebellion. God states they have "loved to wander" indicating that their confession is not genuine. This underscores that repentance requires more than just words; it requires a change of heart and behavior.

8. What is the significance of God saying, "I am weary of relenting," in chapter 15?

God saying, "I am weary of relenting," highlights the ultimate nature of God's coming judgment. This statement indicates a point when God will no longer alter his course of action in response to the people's sins. Despite a history of relenting after prophetic intercession, the people have passed the point of no return. They repeatedly rejected God's invitation to repent. This shows the serious nature of sin and its ultimate consequences.