

Dr. Gary Yates, Jeremiah, Session 19, Jeremiah 26-45

Structural Overview

Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Yates, Jeremiah, Session 19, Jeremiah 26-45, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture by Dr. Gary Yates provides a structural overview of Jeremiah chapters 26-45, focusing on Judah's consistent rejection of God's word throughout Jeremiah's ministry. The lecture emphasizes that this section, while seemingly non-chronological, is thematically structured to highlight the repeated cycle of disobedience and its consequences. Key events from different periods of Jeremiah's ministry are juxtaposed to underscore the unchanging nature of Judah's response. A proposed "Jehoiakim framework" suggests a deliberate literary structure using Jehoiakim's reign as a pivotal point illustrating Judah's transition from potential repentance to inevitable judgment. Ultimately, the lecture connects the narrative to the overarching theme of responding to God's word as a matter of life or death.

2. 26 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Yates, Jeremiah, Session 19 – 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).



**Yates_Jeremiah_Ses
sion19.mp3**

3. Yates, Jeremiah, Session 19, Jeremiah 26-45, Structural Overview

Jeremiah 26-45: A Structural Overview - Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each, based on the provided source material.

1. How does the focus of Jeremiah 26-45 differ from Jeremiah 1-25?
2. What expression is repeated throughout Jeremiah 26-45 to highlight the people's response to God's word?
3. According to the lecture, why is the book of Jeremiah not arranged chronologically?
4. Name the three stages of Jeremiah's ministry described in the lecture.
5. What was the message Jeremiah preached to Zedekiah, and what was the predicted consequence if ignored?
6. What specific action by King Jehoiakim is described as a "decisive act of rebellion" against God?
7. What does Dr. Yates mean by "prophetic mirroring?" Give an example.
8. How did the people respond to Jeremiah's message in the aftermath of the fall of Jerusalem?
9. According to the lecture, how does Jeremiah embody the word of God, and how does this relate to the people's treatment of him?
10. What is the significance of the Jehoiakim framework in understanding the structure of Jeremiah 26-45?

Answer Key

1. Jeremiah 1-25 primarily contains messages of judgment and indictment against Judah, while Jeremiah 26-45 focuses on stories about Jeremiah's life and ministry and how the people responded to his messages. It's the difference between Jeremiah's messages and the people's response to those messages.

2. The expression "they did not listen" or "they did not obey" (Shema in Hebrew) is repeated throughout Jeremiah 26-45, emphasizing the people's consistent refusal to heed God's word. This phrase highlights the root of Judah's failure.
3. The book of Jeremiah is not arranged chronologically to highlight the recurring cycle of disobedience and refusal to hear God's word, demonstrating that the people's response was consistent throughout Jeremiah's ministry, not a matter of what point in time the message was delivered. It's a way to emphasize a theological point rather than a historical one.
4. The three stages of Jeremiah's ministry are: before 597 BC, when repentance was possible; between 597 and 587/586, when the message was to submit to Babylon; and after the fall of Jerusalem, when the call was still to submit to Babylon. These periods demonstrate the consistency of the people's negative response.
5. Jeremiah preached to Zedekiah that he should submit to Babylon in order to save himself, his officials, and the city from destruction; refusing to submit would result in the destruction of Jerusalem. The choice was either submit or be destroyed.
6. King Jehoiakim's cutting up and burning of Jeremiah's scroll, after it was read aloud to him, is described as a decisive act of rebellion against God and a symbolic rejection of His word, demonstrating a complete disregard for God's message.
7. "Prophetic mirroring" refers to the imitation of Jeremiah's prophetic actions by other figures, like the false prophet Hananiah, who used similar symbolic acts (yokes) to give a different message, or Shemaiah who also used a letter to try and counter Jeremiah's.
8. In the aftermath of the fall of Jerusalem, the people continued to reject Jeremiah's message to submit to Babylon, choosing instead to flee to Egypt, resulting in further judgment, even taking Jeremiah with them. Even after so much had happened, the people continued to rebel.
9. Jeremiah embodies the word of God not just in his messages but in his life, which also suffered persecution, mirroring how people rejected the written word by also rejecting the living prophet, in much the same way as Jehoiakim destroyed the written scroll.

10. The Jehoiakim framework, consisting of the four sections dealing with events from the reign of Jehoiakim (chapters 26, 35, 36, and 45), structures the stories in Jeremiah 26-45 into two parallel panels that highlight the people's consistent refusal to obey God's word during his reign.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Address the following questions in an essay format. There are no right or wrong answers; these questions are designed to help you explore the material in greater depth.

1. Analyze the ways in which the book of Jeremiah uses narrative and rhetorical strategies to emphasize the importance of listening to the word of God, focusing on the recurring theme of disobedience and its consequences.
2. Discuss the concept of "prophetic mirroring" in the book of Jeremiah and analyze its significance in portraying the conflict between true and false prophecy.
3. Compare and contrast the roles and actions of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah in their interactions with Jeremiah and his prophecies, and evaluate their ultimate impact on the fate of Judah.
4. Examine how the persecution of Jeremiah functions as a literary device within the narrative of the book, and how his life mirrors the rejection of God's word.
5. Explain how the structure of Jeremiah 26-45, including the Jehoiakim framework and the movement within each panel, contributes to the overall theological message of the book, specifically as it relates to the repeated opportunities and rejections of the divine word.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Shema (שמע):** The Hebrew word for "hear" or "obey," which is used repeatedly in Jeremiah to emphasize the people's failure to heed God's word.
- **Apostasy:** The abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief or principle. Judah's turning away from God is portrayed as apostasy.
- **Oracle:** A divine communication or revelation, often given through a prophet. Jeremiah's prophecies are frequently described as oracles.
- **Literary Design:** The deliberate way in which a text is structured and organized to convey a particular message or effect.
- **Rhetorical Strategy:** The way an author uses language and structure to persuade, inform, or move an audience, and in the book of Jeremiah, that's especially focused on the repeated pattern of rebellion against God's word.
- **Jehoiakim Framework:** The four episodes related to the reign of King Jehoiakim (26, 35, 36, 45) that frame Jeremiah 26-45, dividing the material into two panels emphasizing the rejection of God's word.
- **Prophetic Mirroring:** The literary device in which false prophets imitate the actions and words of true prophets, often to deceive or contradict God's message, like what Hananiah and Shemaiah did.
- **Subjugation:** The act of bringing someone or something under control or domination, a key aspect of Jeremiah's prophecy about submitting to Babylon.
- **Watershed Moment:** A turning point or critical juncture in history or an individual's life, often marked by significant change or decision, in this case, Jehoiakim's actions.
- **The Book of Consolation:** A name given to Jeremiah 30-33 due to its messages of hope, restoration, and future salvation for Israel.

4. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "

Overview:

This document summarizes Dr. Gary Yates's lecture on Jeremiah chapters 26-45, focusing on its structural overview and thematic concerns. Dr. Yates moves away from the judgement messages of the first section of Jeremiah, and into the second section that highlights the response of Judah to Jeremiah's word, with narratives of his life and ministry during the last days of the nation. The central theme revolves around the people's response (or lack thereof) to God's word, primarily their failure to listen and obey, rather than a biographical account of the prophet's life. The lecture emphasizes the importance of the word of God and its impact on individuals and nations, and how the book is a carefully designed structure rather than a haphazard collection of oracles.

Key Themes & Ideas:

1. Shift from Judgment to Response:

- The book of Jeremiah is divided into two main sections. Chapters 1-25 focus on messages of judgment and indictment against Judah. Chapters 26-45 shift to narratives of Jeremiah's life and ministry, specifically how people responded to the messages of judgment (oracles) found in the first section of the book.
- "Chapters 1 to 25 are more of a sampling of his messages of judgment...What we have in 26 to 45 are the stories and the accounts of how the people responded to that message."

1. The Centrality of God's Word:

- The book of Jeremiah emphasizes the word of God's importance. The phrases "thus says the Lord," "the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah," and "a declaration of the Lord" are frequently used (155, 23, and 167 times respectively).
- "The focus of the book of Jeremiah is on the word of God...the word of the Lord is very important to the book of Jeremiah."
- The word of God is described as "a fire in the prophet's mouth."

1. Rejection of God's Word:

- A recurring theme is Judah's failure to listen and obey the word of God. This is highlighted by the repeated phrase "they did not listen" or "they did not obey" (using the Hebrew word "Shema").
- This theme is not exclusive to the second section, and is frequently mentioned throughout the book.
- "There's an expression that appears throughout this section of the book of Jeremiah... the people did not listen or the people did not obey the message of Jeremiah."
- The failure to listen is not just a problem during Jeremiah's time, but a persistent issue throughout the history of Israel.

1. **Theological Reflection, not Biography:**

- The purpose of chapters 26-45 is not to provide a biography of Jeremiah, but to highlight the theological consequences of Judah's disobedience.
- "The purpose of this section of the book is not to give us a biography of Jeremiah's life...it's more to provide a theological reflection on what are the consequences of the people's choices, primarily not to listen to the word of God."

1. **Non-Chronological Arrangement:**

- The section from chapters 26-45 is deliberately not structured in a linear, chronological fashion. The book goes back and forth through different time periods and genres. This is a deliberate structuring choice to underscore the recurring pattern of disobedience.
- "There is no real chronology in this section...it is definitely not going to read in a linear, chronological way."

1. **Three Stages of Ministry:**

- Dr. Yates proposes that Jeremiah's ministry can be divided into three periods, with events from each period interwoven non-chronologically to show that the people's response was consistent across all periods:
- **Pre-597:** Before the major Babylonian crisis, when Judah still had the opportunity to repent. (Examples: Chapters 26 and 36)
- **597-587:** After the second exile but before the destruction of Jerusalem. (Examples: Chapters 27-29, 34, 37-39)

- **Post-587:** After the fall of Jerusalem, dealing with the aftermath of exile. (Examples: Chapters 40-44)
- "the ministry of Jeremiah could be divided into three basic time periods...events from all three of these different time periods are being joined together...to say the response that the people had to Jeremiah at the beginning of his ministry isn't really very different to the response that the people had at the end of his ministry."

1. **The Cycle of Disobedience:**

- The arrangement highlights a repeating cycle where people consistently reject God's word throughout Jeremiah's ministry.
- "The arrangement of this material highlights the recurring cycle of the people disobeying and refusing to hear the word of the Lord."

1. **Persecution of the Prophet:**

- Jeremiah's life and treatment are a reflection of the rejection of God's word. The people did not just reject the word, but took out their disbelief and anger against Jeremiah himself.
- "When the people do not accept the word of God, the way that they're often going to respond to that message is by abusing the prophet."
- Examples of this are found throughout the text, including: his hometown seeking his death (Chapter 11), being beaten and put in the stocks (Chapter 20), threatened with death for his temple sermon (Chapter 26), opposed by false prophets (Chapters 27-29), imprisoned (Chapter 32), his scroll destroyed (Chapter 36), thrown in a cistern (Chapter 38), and forcibly taken to Egypt (Chapter 43).

1. **The Jehoiakim Framework:**

- Dr. Yates proposes a framework centered on the reign of King Jehoiakim as a way of understanding the structure of chapters 26-45. This framework divides the section into two parallel panels (26-35 and 36-45) that both mirror and contrast each other.
- The four chapters that specifically mention Jehoiakim (26, 35, 36, and 45) act as bookends.
- "These four stories about or episodes or messages from the time of Jehoiakim provide a frame around chapters 26 to 45."

- The Jehoiakim framework is designed to reinforce that his reign represents a crucial point in Judah's history when Judah moved from possible repentance to inevitable judgement.

1. **Parallel Panels:**

- The two panels highlight a similar movement: initial possibility of repentance and then ultimately the people rejecting God's word.
- Panel 1: Chapter 26 shows a possible opportunity for repentance, but chapter 35 concludes with the judgment because they did not listen.
- Panel 2: Chapter 36 presents the scroll as another opportunity to repent, but chapter 44 shows the people continuing to not listen, leading to more judgement.

1. **Promise of Restoration:**

- In the midst of judgement and disobedience, the promise of restoration exists in chapters 30-33. However, this restoration is in the distant future, not within the life and ministry of Jeremiah.
- "In the midst of all this national disobedience, there are also the promises of restoration...but it's not going to appear in the near future."
- This contrasts with the disobedience that follows in the second panel (chapters 40-43)

Conclusion:

Dr. Yates' lecture reveals a sophisticated understanding of the book of Jeremiah, especially the section of chapters 26 to 45, as a carefully crafted message intended to illustrate the crucial relationship between the people of Judah, and God's word. It highlights the consequences of rejecting God's word and shows how this theme transcends the timeline of Jeremiah's ministry. By using both the repeated phrase "they did not listen" and the Jehoiakim framework, the book underscores the necessity of heeding God's word and the devastation that follows disobedience. The practical application, is a reminder of the life and death choice we have in our response to the word of the Lord.

This briefing doc should provide a solid foundation for understanding the structural and thematic complexities of Jeremiah 26-45 as presented in Dr. Yates' lecture.

5. FAQs on Yates, Jeremiah, Session 19, Jeremiah 26-45, Structural Overview, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions about Jeremiah 26-45

1. **How does the focus of Jeremiah chapters 26-45 differ from chapters 1-25?**
 Chapters 1-25 primarily consist of Jeremiah's messages of judgment and indictment against Judah. In contrast, chapters 26-45 shift focus to narratives and stories about Jeremiah's life, ministry, and the events surrounding the fall of Judah. This section illustrates the people's response to the messages proclaimed in the first part of the book. In other words, chapters 1-25 represent Jeremiah's prophetic messages, and chapters 26-45 show the practical, real-life reactions to these messages.
2. **What is the central theme that unifies Jeremiah 26-45?** The central unifying theme of chapters 26-45 is Judah's consistent failure to listen and obey the word of the Lord, as presented through Jeremiah's prophecies. This is highlighted by the repetition of the phrase "they did not listen" and the consequences of this disobedience leading to national destruction and exile. The section is not a simple biography of Jeremiah but rather a theological reflection on the consequences of rejecting God's word.
3. **Why is the book of Jeremiah not arranged in strict chronological order, particularly in chapters 26-45?** The non-chronological arrangement of chapters 26-45 emphasizes the recurring cycle of the people's disobedience rather than creating a linear biography of Jeremiah. It combines events from different periods of Jeremiah's ministry to show that the people's response to God's word was consistently one of rejection, regardless of the specific time or circumstances. Events from the reign of Jehoiakim are juxtaposed with those of Zedekiah to highlight the constant resistance.

4. **What are the three main stages of Jeremiah's ministry, as suggested in the provided materials, and how are they reflected in the structure of chapters 26-45?** The three stages of Jeremiah's ministry are: (1) The early ministry before 597 BC when repentance and averting judgment was possible; (2) The period between 597-587 BC where the choice was to submit to Babylon to avoid worse destruction; and (3) The post-fall of Jerusalem period after 587 BC, where Jeremiah continues to urge submission to Babylon. These periods are not arranged chronologically, but are interleaved to highlight the consistent rejection of God's word across all phases of his ministry.
5. **What is the "Jehoiakim Framework" and how does it structure chapters 26-45?** The "Jehoiakim Framework" refers to the four sections in chapters 26-45 that are specifically dated to the reign of King Jehoiakim (26:1, 35:1, 36:1, and 45:1). These sections act as bookends that frame the rest of the material into two parallel panels (26-35 and 36-45). This structure is designed to emphasize the decisive moment of Judah's rejection of God's word during Jehoiakim's reign and how that rejection made judgment inevitable.
6. **How does the "Jehoiakim Framework" emphasize the people's missed opportunities for repentance?** The "Jehoiakim Framework" highlights the cycle of missed opportunities for repentance. In both panels (26-35 and 36-45), the sections begin with the possibility of the people heeding God's word, thus potentially averting judgment. However, both sections conclude with the people refusing to listen, ultimately resulting in the judgment the prophet had foretold. This parallel structure reinforces the repetitiveness of their disobedience.
7. **How does the persecution of Jeremiah relate to the rejection of God's word in chapters 26-45?** The persecution of Jeremiah directly reflects the people's rejection of God's word. As a living embodiment of God's message, he experienced abuse, imprisonment, and threats on his life, parallel to how Jehoiakim destroyed the scroll of Jeremiah's words. The people's rejection of Jeremiah is a direct manifestation of their rejection of God's message and their attempt to silence or harm the one who speaks that message.

8. **What is the ultimate message of Jeremiah 26-45 regarding the importance of listening to God's word?** The ultimate message is that listening to and obeying God's word is a matter of life and death, both in a spiritual and national sense. The stories in Jeremiah 26-45 show that ignoring God's word leads to destruction, while embracing it offers the only hope for true life and restoration. The book underscores that it is one's response to the word of the Lord that determines their fate.