

Dr. Gary Yates, Jeremiah, Session 22, Jeremiah 27-29.

Prophetic Conflict

Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Yates, Jeremiah, Session 22, Jeremiah 27-29. Prophetic Conflict, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture by Dr. Gary Yates **analyzes** Jeremiah chapters 27-29, focusing on the **prophetic conflict** between Jeremiah and false prophets during Zedekiah's reign. **Jeremiah** preached submission to Babylon as God's judgment, while **false prophets** promised imminent deliverance, leading to a crucial **theological debate** over covenant faithfulness and the interpretation of God's actions. The lecture **examines** several instances of this conflict, highlighting the consequences of heeding false prophecies and the importance of discerning true prophecy. Ultimately, the lecture emphasizes the **life-or-death implications** of choosing between faithful obedience and false promises of peace.

2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Yates, Jeremiah, Session 22 – 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
sion22.mp3**

3. Yates, Jeremiah, Session 22, Jeremiah 27-29, Prophetic Conflict

Jeremiah 27-29: Prophetic Conflict Study Guide

Quiz

1. What is the central issue of prophetic conflict highlighted in Jeremiah 27-29, and how does it relate to Deuteronomy 18? *The central issue is the struggle between true and false prophets, specifically concerning the proper response to the Babylonian crisis. This conflict is framed by Deuteronomy 18, which outlines the characteristics of a true prophet, emphasizing the delivery of messages aligned with God's will, and not messages of false hope.*
2. According to Dr. Yates, what is the structural purpose of the Jehoiakim narratives (chapters 26-35) in the book of Jeremiah? *The Jehoiakim narratives serve as a framework demonstrating Judah's rejection of God's word, leading to their judgment and exile. This structural element emphasizes that Judah's failure to fulfill its obligations to God led to the consequences described in the book.*
3. How did the options facing Judah under Zedekiah differ from those under Jehoiakim, according to the lecture? *Under Jehoiakim, Judah had the opportunity to choose God's way and be spared judgment. However, under Zedekiah, their options were either submitting to Babylon and being spared or resisting and facing absolute destruction, meaning that military resistance was not a viable option.*
4. What is the significance of Jeremiah's message that the Babylonians are God's "servant"? *Jeremiah's message that the Babylonians are God's "servant" indicates that they are God's instrument of judgment against Judah for breaking the covenant. This is a theological assessment, not merely political, as it highlights that resisting Babylon is ultimately resisting God's will.*
5. How does Jeremiah challenge the common belief that being God's chosen people exempts them from judgment, according to the lecture? *Jeremiah challenges the belief of an exempt status by emphasizing that Judah is no different than other nations and is subject to God's judgment. This is supported by examples from the prophet Amos, who also leveled judgment against Israel.*
6. What is the significance of Jeremiah wearing a yoke in chapter 27, and how does it relate to his message? *Jeremiah wearing a yoke was a sign act, a visual*

representation of his message of submission to Babylon. It symbolized the subjugation of the nations to the Babylonian empire and that resisting was futile.

7. How does Hananiah's message in chapter 28 contrast with Jeremiah's, and what past traditions might he appeal to? *Hananiah's message promises a quick end to the Babylonian crisis within two years, contrasted with Jeremiah's prediction of a 70-year exile. Hananiah may have appealed to Zion traditions (like Psalms 46) and the story of Jerusalem's deliverance from the Assyrians as a foundation for his prophecy of quick deliverance.*
8. What is "prophetic mirroring", and how does it manifest between Jeremiah and Hananiah? *"Prophetic mirroring" refers to the similarity in actions or words between true and false prophets. It is evident in how both Jeremiah and Hananiah are called prophets, both claim to speak "thus says the Lord," and both perform sign acts, making it difficult for the people to discern truth.*
9. In the lecture, what is Jeremiah's test to determine true and false prophets in chapter 28? *Jeremiah's test involves comparing the message with reality and evaluating the prophet's past predictions. If a prophet predicts judgment, his message should be taken seriously, whereas prophets of peace should be confirmed by their predictions coming true. Further, true prophets can intercede with the Lord, even if it's just for the return of Temple vessels.*
10. According to the lecture, what is the key message in Jeremiah's letter to the exiles in chapter 29? *Jeremiah's letter to the exiles urges them to settle in Babylon, build houses, and seek the peace of the city, acknowledging their long-term stay. This subverts their ideas that they will be soon returning and asserts that they must accept their place in exile.*

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the concept of prophetic conflict in Jeremiah 27-29. How does the text depict the different types of messages presented by Jeremiah and his opponents, and what does this conflict reveal about the nature of true and false prophecy?
2. Discuss the theological implications of Jeremiah's message that the Babylonians are God's instrument of judgment. How does this idea challenge traditional understandings of God's relationship with Israel, and what does it suggest about the nature of divine sovereignty?
3. Examine the role of "prophetic mirroring" in Jeremiah 27-29. How does this technique contribute to the confusion and uncertainty among the people, and what does it reveal about the challenge of discerning true prophecy?
4. Compare and contrast the approaches taken by Jeremiah and Hananiah in Jeremiah 28. How does the narrative demonstrate the different standards by which true and false prophecies are judged? What does this case study teach us about the importance of obedience to God's word, even when that word is difficult?
5. Discuss the significance of Jeremiah's letter to the exiles in Jeremiah 29. How does his message reshape their understanding of exile and their relationship with Babylon? How might this challenge their expectations of God's covenant with Israel?

Glossary

- **Covenant:** A solemn agreement between two parties, in this context, between God and Israel, outlining obligations and blessings.
- **False Prophet:** An individual who claims to speak for God but delivers messages that do not align with God's will, often offering false hope or comfort.
- **Prophetic Conflict:** The struggle between true and false prophets, and the resulting confusion and debate among the people regarding which message to follow.
- **Jehoiakim Framework:** The narrative structure focused on Jehoiakim's reign (609-597 BCE), highlighting his rejection of God's word as a cause of Judah's judgment and exile.
- **Zedekiah:** The last king of Judah (597-586 BCE), during whose reign the Babylonian siege and destruction of Jerusalem occurred.
- **Babylon:** The empire that conquered Judah and took its people into exile; portrayed as God's instrument of judgment.
- **Sheker:** A Hebrew word meaning "lie" or "falsehood," used to describe the messages of false prophets.
- **Sign Act:** A symbolic action performed by a prophet to illustrate or emphasize a message, such as Jeremiah wearing a yoke.
- **Prophetic Mirroring:** The phenomenon where false prophets imitate true prophets in their actions or words, making it difficult to discern the truth.
- **Exile:** The forced removal of the people of Judah from their land to Babylon as a consequence of their disobedience to God.
- **Zion Theology:** A theological tradition centered on the belief that Jerusalem is inviolable and under God's protection.
- **Shalom:** A Hebrew word that conveys wholeness, peace, and well-being, especially when in right relationship with God.

4. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided source, "Yates_Jer_En_Lecture22.pdf," focusing on Jeremiah 27-29 and the prophetic conflict.

Briefing Document: Jeremiah 27-29 - The Prophetic Conflict

Introduction

This document summarizes Dr. Gary Yates's lecture (Session 22) on Jeremiah 27-29, which centers on the theme of "prophetic conflict." The lecture explores the tension between Jeremiah's message of submission to Babylon as God's ordained judgment and the false prophets who promised peace and deliverance. It highlights how this conflict significantly shaped the fate of Judah and emphasizes the critical role of theology in influencing actions and decisions.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. **Prophetic Conflict:** The core issue in Jeremiah 27-29 is the intense struggle between Jeremiah and false prophets. These false prophets offered messages of hope and imminent deliverance from Babylonian rule, contrasting sharply with Jeremiah's call for submission. This echoes the conflict first raised in Jeremiah 23 and aligns with Deuteronomy 18's criteria for true prophets.
- **Quote:** *"The struggle that Jeremiah and his ministry had with false prophets that were promising the people peace and were giving the people a reason and a rationalization to ignore his message and his warnings of judgment."*
1. **Structure and Context:** The lecture frames Jeremiah 26-45 as a narrative demonstrating Judah's rejection of God's word, leading to exile. This section is further structured with events from the time of Jehoiakim (609-597 BC) acting as a framework around events during the reign of Zedekiah (597-586 BC).
- The Jehoiakim framework highlights the rejection of God's word, while the inner structure focuses on the choice facing Judah under Zedekiah to submit to Babylon or face utter destruction.
- **Quote:** *"Chapters 26 to 45 tell the story of the rejection of the word of the Lord and the theological purpose behind this: to demonstrate that it was the rejection of God's word that ultimately led to the judgment of exile."*

1. **Shifting Choices:** During Jehoiakim's reign, Judah had the opportunity to choose God and avoid judgment. Under Zedekiah, however, the choice became one of submission to God's ordained instrument (Babylon) or total annihilation.

- **Quote:** *"The choice facing Zedekiah and the people is to choose God's way or be absolutely destroyed."*

1. **Jeremiah's Theology:**

- Jeremiah viewed the Babylonian invasion as God's judgment for Judah's covenant violations.
- He emphasized that God was using Nebuchadnezzar as his "servant" and instrument of justice, and resistance was futile.
- **Quote:** *"Jeremiah is warning the people that God is using the Babylonians as his instrument of judgment."*
- Jeremiah stressed that Judah's special status as God's chosen people did not exempt them from judgment when they were unfaithful.
- **Quote:** *"...the prophet levels them off and say, hey, you're under the same sentence of judgment that all of these other people are."*
- He advocated for a long-term view, stating the exile would last 70 years, urging the exiles to settle in Babylon and pray for its peace.

1. **False Prophets' Theology:**

- The false prophets believed that God was obligated to protect Israel regardless of their actions due to their special covenantal relationship with him.
- **Quote:** *"They believe that God has chosen Israel as his special people, that God is obligated because of that to bless them and that God is going to protect them no matter what."*
- They offered short-term promises of peace and deliverance, often within two years, or even "two days."
- They appealed to past divine deliverances (like the Assyrian defeat in 701) and traditions of Zion theology, believing Jerusalem was inviolable.

1. **Three Instances of Prophetic Conflict:** The lecture details three specific instances of prophetic conflict in Chapters 27-29:

- **Chapter 27:** Jeremiah confronts a delegation of ambassadors from surrounding nations and King Zedekiah. He delivers the message that Nebuchadnezzar is God's instrument and that resistance is futile. He repeats this message three times, each time directed at a different audience: the envoys, Zedekiah, and then the priests and people. Jeremiah emphasizes that all nations, including Judah, are subject to God's decree and Nebuchadnezzar's dominion.
- **Quote:** *"Resisting him, withstanding him is not going to work...This conference that you're having...is not going to work."*
- **Chapter 28:** The dramatic confrontation between Jeremiah and Hananiah. Hananiah, also claiming to be a prophet of the Lord, breaks Jeremiah's yoke and prophesies a two-year deliverance from Babylon. The lecture describes this as "prophetic mirroring," with both prophets appearing to perform the same actions, making it difficult for people to discern the truth. Initially, Jeremiah even responds "Amen," indicating a desire for Hananiah's prophecy to be true. However, he later clarifies a framework for distinguishing between true and false prophecy: a prophet of judgment needs to be taken seriously with an assessment of covenant faithfulness, and a prophet of peace needs to be confirmed by fulfilled events.
- **Quote:** *"And so, we have the struggle over discerning a true prophet from a false one."*
- Hananiah is ultimately struck down by God for his false prophecy, dying within two months, a stark contrast to his promise of two years of peace.
- **Quote:** *"The prophets of peace were promising life. The reality is that if they follow them, they will experience the same death that the prophets themselves experienced."*
- **Chapter 29:** Jeremiah sends a letter to the exiles in Babylon urging them to settle in, to build homes, plant gardens, and pray for the peace of the city, since they would be there for 70 years. He contrasts this with the false prophets in exile who were offering immediate deliverance. Two such false prophets, Ahab and Zedekiah, are mentioned and are ultimately executed by Nebuchadnezzar. Another prophet, Shemaiah, who opposes Jeremiah's message, is also judged.

- **Quote:** *"Jerusalem's not the city of Shalom anymore. Babylon is."*
- He addresses the often-quoted promise of God's plans for welfare (Jeremiah 29:11), emphasizing that this was a specific promise to the exiles and not a general guarantee for all believers to be free of hardship.
- **Quote:** *"Be careful of claiming someone else's promises for yourself. There's a general promise here that God has the welfare and the well-being of his people in mind."*
- 1. **Theological Implications:** The conflict demonstrates the profound impact of theology on people's behavior and decisions. The contrasting theological views of Jeremiah and the false prophets led to opposite courses of action, with dire consequences for those who chose to follow the false prophets.
- **Quote:** *"What we believe about God and the ideas that we have about God ultimately determine the most important decisions and actions that we make in life."*
- The lecture warns against dismissing theological debates as unimportant, highlighting how theology is directly tied to real-world actions and outcomes.
- **Quote:** *"I think they're undermining the importance of something that's very real, the way that our theology ultimately determines our behavior."*
- 1. **The Nature of True Prophecy:** True prophecy, as exemplified by Jeremiah, requires a correct understanding of God's character, his covenant with Israel, and his immediate plans for his people. It is not always comforting or popular, and it often calls for repentance.

Conclusion

The lecture on Jeremiah 27-29 underscores the crucial importance of discernment and theological accuracy in determining one's actions. Jeremiah's call for submission to Babylon was not a political statement but a theological one, rooted in his understanding of God's sovereignty and Judah's covenantal failures. The consequences of choosing to listen to false prophets and to ignore God's warnings, as told in the events of this part of Jeremiah, served as a stark warning to Judah, one that continues to be relevant today.

5. FAQs on Yates, Jeremiah, Session 22, Jeremiah 27-29. Prophetic Conflict, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Jeremiah 27-29 and Prophetic Conflict

1. **What is the main focus of Jeremiah 27-29, and how does it relate to the broader themes in Jeremiah?** The primary focus of Jeremiah 27-29 is the "prophetic conflict" between Jeremiah and false prophets during the reign of Zedekiah. This section highlights a crucial choice facing Judah: whether to submit to Babylonian rule or resist. It underscores the theme of Judah's rejection of God's word as the cause of their coming exile, demonstrating how their actions were a direct consequence of their theological choices. This section also contributes to the broader structure of the book, illustrating the rejection of God's word and the judgment that follows from that.
2. **How did the political and historical context of Zedekiah's reign influence the messages of Jeremiah and the false prophets?** Zedekiah's reign (597-586 BC) was a time of political instability and constant threat from Babylon. Various surrounding nations were forming alliances to resist Babylonian power. Jeremiah, under God's guidance, urged submission to Babylon as a form of divine judgment for Judah's covenantal unfaithfulness. False prophets, appealing to a popular desire for peace and national pride, proclaimed a swift end to the Babylonian crisis, often citing past divine protection of Jerusalem. This conflict arose because the false prophets were claiming that God was obligated to protect them due to their chosen status, while Jeremiah understood the covenant as requiring obedience, not just special status.
3. **What was Jeremiah's message regarding the Babylonian crisis, and why did he advocate for submission to Babylon?** Jeremiah's message was that God was using the Babylonians as an instrument of divine judgment against Judah for their covenant violations. He argued that resistance was futile, not just politically but theologically. He believed that God had given dominion to Nebuchadnezzar and to resist him was to resist God's will. Jeremiah urged the people to submit to Babylon, acknowledging God's hand in their subjugation, and to repent and turn back to God as the only path to survival and eventual restoration. This was, he said, the will of God and the only viable path for them to take at this point in their history.

4. **How did the messages of the false prophets differ from Jeremiah's, and what was their basis for these opposing views?** False prophets proclaimed a message of peace and immediate deliverance, promising that the Babylonian crisis would end quickly (within a couple of years, or even sooner according to some). They believed that God was obligated to protect Jerusalem due to their chosen status and the theological traditions surrounding Zion and God's covenant. They dismissed Jeremiah's warnings of a lengthy exile and used past divine interventions (like the deliverance from the Assyrians in 701 BC) to justify their message. They believed that God would protect them from harm, irrespective of their actions.
5. **What specific instances of prophetic conflict are highlighted in Jeremiah 27-29, and how do they demonstrate the tension between Jeremiah and the false prophets?** Three specific instances are shown. The first, in chapter 27, shows Jeremiah delivering his message to envoys from various nations, as well as to Zedekiah, all while wearing a yoke of submission. The second conflict is in chapter 28 when Jeremiah is confronted by the prophet Hananiah, who dramatically breaks Jeremiah's yoke, claiming that the exile will be over in two years. In chapter 29, Jeremiah sends a letter to the exiles in Babylon urging them to settle down and accept their circumstances, while false prophets in Babylon, like Ahab and Zedekiah, are contradicting his message, and the prophet Shemaiah attempts to censor him with a letter back to Jerusalem. These instances reveal the starkly different perspectives and the struggle for people to discern true prophecy.
6. **What was the significance of Jeremiah's wooden yoke, and what did Hananiah's breaking of it symbolize?** Jeremiah's wooden yoke was a symbolic act representing the message that Judah and the surrounding nations should submit to the yoke of Babylonian rule. It visually communicated that resistance was futile. Hananiah's breaking of the yoke was a counter-symbolic act that denied Jeremiah's message. It symbolized his claim that Babylon's power would soon be broken, promising freedom and a quick end to the exile. This also showed the sharp contrast between the messages of the two prophets and the tension of the moment for the people.

7. **How does the concept of prophetic mirroring play out in the interactions between Jeremiah and the false prophets?** Prophetic mirroring refers to the way false prophets mimicked the actions and language of true prophets in order to gain credibility. Hananiah, for example, like Jeremiah, claimed to speak in the name of the Lord, performed a symbolic act of breaking the yoke, and used language that mirrored some of Jeremiah's pronouncements. The text also refers to both men as prophets, making it difficult to tell who was speaking the truth and adding to the confusion among the people. This tactic shows how the false prophets attempted to legitimate their message with actions and language that people would recognize as traditionally prophetic, even while delivering a contradictory message.
8. **What are the lasting implications or lessons from the prophetic conflict described in Jeremiah 27-29, particularly regarding the nature of truth and the consequences of false prophecy?** Jeremiah 27-29 emphasizes the importance of aligning one's beliefs with God's revealed word and the reality of the current situation. The consequences of accepting false prophecies, as seen in the deaths of Hananiah, Ahab, and Zedekiah, shows the dangers of choosing a message based on what one wants to hear rather than what is true. This section also illustrates how theology shapes one's actions and that what one believes about God has real-world consequences. Ultimately, the passage underscores that true prophecy often involves challenging messages that require repentance and a realistic understanding of God's judgment, whereas false prophecy offers empty promises that lead to destruction. The choice between true and false prophecy is presented as a matter of life and death.