

Wednesday Night Supplemental Teaching

Covered this week: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations

Isaiah

Key Themes

- Trustworthiness of the Lord
- Lack of faith leads to destruction.
- God's sovereignty over the nations.
- God's ultimate plans for the redemption of all things.

Key Characters: Isaiah, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Sennacherib

Setting: 750 – 681 BC

Key Verses:

- Isaiah 1:18 – “Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”
- Isaiah 6:3 – “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”
- Isaiah 9:6 – “For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”
- Isaiah 53:5 – “But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.”
- Isaiah 65:17 – “See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.”

Outline

- I. Introduction
 - a. Overture (1-5)
 - b. Commissioning (6)
- II. Assyrian Context: Israel invaded by Assyria (Ahaz/Tiglath-Pileser III)
 - a. Oracles at the time of Syro-Ephraimite Coalition (7-12)
 - b. Oracles against the nations (13-23)
 - c. Apocalyptic Conclusion to Oracles Against the Nations (24-27)
- III. Assyrian Context: Judah threatened by Assyria (Hezekiah/Sennacherib)
 - a. “Woe” Oracles at the Time of the siege of Jerusalem (28-33)
 - b. Apocalyptic Conclusion of “Woe” Oracles (34-35)
 - c. Resolution of the Assyrian Crisis (36-37)
 - d. Transition to Babylonian Crisis (38-39)
- IV. Scenario Three: Projected Oracles Addressing Exiles (40-55)

V. Scenario Four: Projected Oracles Addressing Postexilic Situation (56-66)

Other Interesting Notes

- Isaiah has several themes that are picked up in the life of Christ.
 - o A child to be born whose name is Immanuel, "God with us" (9:6)
 - o The Suffering Servant (42:1-7; 49:1-9; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12)
 - o Yahweh as the Holy One of Israel whose aim is reconciliation (43:22-28)
 - o Yahweh as the Redeemer of Israel (41:14; 43:14; 44:6, 24; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7, 26; 54:5, 8; 59:20; 60:16; 63:16).
- Isaiah is one of the first books to emphasize the eschatological nature of God's kingdom.

Jeremiah

Key Themes

- The presence of the temple does not guarantee God's protection. God desires for his people to be faithful.
- God will judge Judah for breaking the covenant.
- Even in exile, God will be at work among his people.
- God will bring about a new covenant that will transform people's hearts.

Key Characters: Jeremiah, Baruch, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah

Setting: Judah, in the years leading up to and just beyond the fall of Jerusalem (586 BC)

Key Verses:

- Jeremiah 1:5 - "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart for the nations."
- Jeremiah 4:1 - "If you, Israel, will return, then return to me," says the Lord.
- Jeremiah 17:9 - "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can stand it?"
- Jeremiah 29:4-5, 7, 10-11 - "This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 'Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce...seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper...When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'
- Jeremiah 31:31, 33 - "The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah...I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

Outline:

- I. The Call of Jeremiah (1)
- II. Book 1: The Oracles of Jeremiah (2-25)
- III. Biographical Interlude 1 (26-29)
- IV. Book 2: The Book of Consolation (30-31)
- V. Biographical Interlude 2 (32-45)

- VI. Book 3: Oracles Against the Nations (46-51)
- VII. Historical Appendix: The Fall of Jerusalem (52)

Other Interesting Notes

- Jeremiah started writing this book 20 years into his ministry (36:1-3). He hired the scribe Baruch to write it down (36:4). The first scroll was destroyed by the king (36:4) but was reproduced by Baruch. Tradition holds that the biographical sections were likely penned by Baruch about the prophet since they refer to Jeremiah in the third person (Hill and Walton, 534)
- The book is not organized chronologically making it difficult for modern readers.
- Ancient letters have been discovered from this time from military leaders that speak of a troublemaking prophet. They may be an external reference to Jeremiah.

Lamentations

Key Themes

- God punishes sin.
- God is just.
- God instructs the faithful through suffering.
- God is faithful and provides hope to those who trust in him.

Key Characters: Jeremiah

Setting: The fall of Jerusalem

Key Verses:

- 2:11 – “My eyes fail from weeping, I am in torment within; my heart is poured out on the ground because my people are destroyed, because children and infants faint in the streets of the city.”
- 2:17 – “The Lord has done what he planned; he has fulfilled his word.”
- 3:22-25 – “Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, ‘The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait on him. The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him.’”
- 5:15-22 – “The crown has fallen from our head. Woe to us, for we have sinned.”

Outline

- I. Lamentations for Jerusalem’s Misery and Desertion (1)
- II. Lamentations for the Daughter of Zion Cut Down in Yahweh’s Wrath (2)
- III. The Poet’s Grief and Hope (3)
- IV. The Horror of the Siege (4)
- V. Zion’s Disgrace Remembered; A Petition for Restoration (5)

Interesting Notes

- Lamentations is assigned to be read annually on the ninth day of Ab, the day of mourning for the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (by the Babylonians in 587 BC and the Romans in AD 70).

- Jeremiah is traditionally considered the author. This is based upon the Septuagint's rendering of the first verse. Hebrew manuscripts do not identify the author.
- Three of the five poems take the traditional form of a Hebrew funeral dirge.