



Handout for week of 10/22/18 Mark 10: 46-52 & Jer: 31: 7-9

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Jer. 31: For thus saith HaShem: sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout at the head of the nations; announce ye, praise ye, and say: 'O HaShem, save Thy people, The remnant of Israel.' 8 Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together; a great company shall they return hither. 9 They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them; I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is My first-born.

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| 1st Capture of Jerusalem | 605 |
| 2nd Capture of Jerusalem | 597 |
| 3rd Capture of Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple Destroyed | 587 |
| Jeremiah, Obadiah | 585 |

COMMENTARY: Jeremiah lived at the close of the seventh and in the first part of the sixth century before Christ; a contemporary of Draco and Solon of Athens. In the year 627, during the reign of Josias, he was called at a youthful age to be a prophet, and for nearly half a century, at least from 627 to 585, he bore the burden of the prophetic office. He belonged to a priestly (not a high-priestly) family of Anathoth, a small country town northeast of Jerusalem now called Anata; but he seems never to have performed priestly duties at the temple. The scenes of his prophetic activity were, for a short time, his native town, for the greater part of his life, the metropolis Jerusalem, and, for a time after the fall of Jerusalem, Masphath (Jer., xl, 6) and the Jewish colonies of the Dispersion in Egypt (Jer., xliii, 6 sqq.). His name has received varying etymological interpretations ("Lofty is Jahwah" or "Jahweh founds"); it appears also as the name of other persons in the Old Testament. Sources for the history of his life and times are, first, the book of prophecies bearing his name, and, second, the Books of Kings and of Paralipomenon (Chronicles). It is only when taken in connection with the history of his times that the external course of his life, the individuality of his nature, and the ruling theme of his discourses can be understood.

The last years of the seventh century and the first decades of the sixth brought with them a series of political catastrophes which completely changed national conditions in Western Asia. The overthrow of the Assyrian Empire, which was completed in 606 by the conquest of Niniveh, induced Nechao II of Egypt to attempt, with the aid of a large army, to strike a crushing blow at the ancient enemy on the Euphrates. Palestine was in the direct route between the great powers of the world of that era on the Euphrates and the Nile, and the Jewish nation was roused to action by the march of the Egyptian army through its territory. Josias, the last descendent of David, had begun in Jerusalem a moral and religious reformation "in the ways of David", the carrying out of which, however, was frustrated by the lethargy of the people and the foreign policy of the king. The attempt of Josias to check the advance of the Egyptians cost him his life at the battle of Mageddo, 608. Four years later, Nechao, the conqueror at Mageddo, was slain by Nabuchodonosor at Carchemish on the Euphrates. From that time Nabuchodonosor's eyes were fixed on Jerusalem. The last, shadowy kings upon the throne of David, the three sons of Josias—Joachaz, Joakim, and Sedecias—hastened the destruction of the kingdom by their unsuccessful foreign policy and their anti-religious or, at least, weak internal policy. Both Joakim and Sedecias, in spite of the warnings of the prophet Jeremiah, allowed themselves to be misled by the war party in the nation into refusing to pay the tribute to the King of Babylon. The king's revenge followed quickly upon the rebellion. In the second great expedition Jerusalem was conquered (586) and destroyed after a siege of eighteen months, which was only interrupted by the battle with the Egyptian army of relief. The Lord cast aside his footstool in the day of his wrath and sent Juda into the Babylonian Captivity.