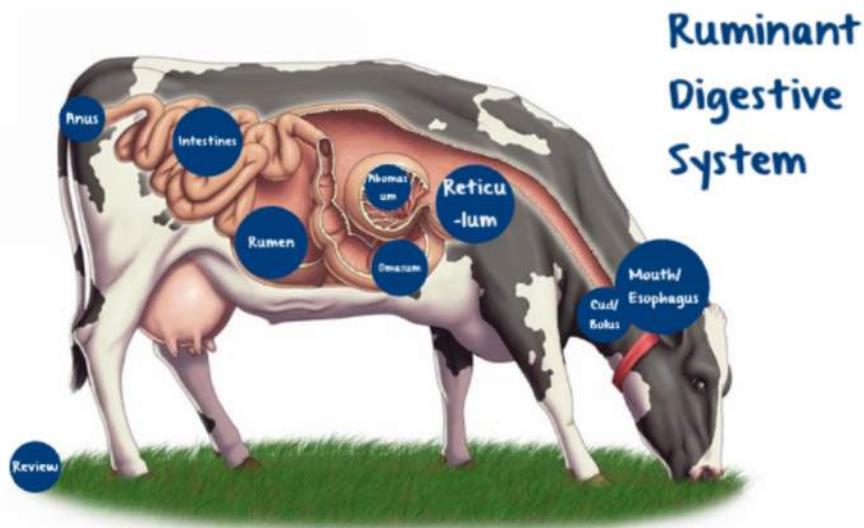


Jeremiah 26

Read Jeremiah 26:1-6:

Meditating on the Word

This chapter starts by instructing Jeremiah to be clearly spoken and not change any of God's instructions to his people. We, in turn are to be more than listeners. We are told to *meditate* on God's word. This word meditate (ruminate) comes from how a cow will burp up her food and re-chew it over and over, until she has broken it down further and further into the smallest digestible components. She goes over it 4 times before it is considered to be adequately processed. You can see a cow resting in the shade in the heat of the day chewing and chewing. She is sending food from her first stomach to her second and third, until it gets sent on to the fourth stomach. We are called to also re-process and reconsider the details of the scriptural accounts and pull more details and more messages. How many times have you read the same thing and come away with something new? Jeremiah is a book that you can read and come away with nothing more than '*turn or burn*'. Today, we are backtracking a bit to get the full story behind the story (for context). We are called to be like detectives analyzing all of the clues and details.



Time Travel

Right off of the bat it does seem like we are going backwards in time as we read this chapter. We just went backwards four years since our prior chapter. Prophetic writings tend to do that.

You find a lot of this *time travel* in Daniel, the Gospel of John, etc... God is outside of time; but we are living chronologically. In fact, the more spiritual the language (like Revelation) the more it skips back and forth; and flips back and forth from now to future. We talk a lot about how heaven will be more bright and more beautiful and more fulfilling and clearer headed and well intentioned. One day we will see more clearly than our current prophetic looking glasses allow. It is hard to see how the past and the present are together as one in God's eyes.

We have already passed this point in Jeremiah; but we are now reaching back to details not given previously. Chapter 26 is connected with chapters 20 and 36. This book follows a sequence in general; but has exceptions. For example, chapter 25 was written eight years before chapter 24.

There is a sequence in a general sense...more than in a line-by-line sense. The prophecies in this section are in two distinct parts. Chapters 25 - 29 speak constantly of captivity and its duration; while chapters 30 - 24 deal rather with the restoration afterwards (as you can see below).

Bible Timeline

627 BC	The Call of Jeremiah	Jeremiah 1
627 BC	Jeremiah Declares Judah Forsakes God	Jeremiah 2 - 6
627 BC	Jeremiah's Message at the Temple Gate	Jeremiah 7 - 10
622 BC	Jeremiah Proclaims God's Covenant	Jeremiah 11, 12
609 BC	Jeremiah Proclaims Covenant Is Broken	Jeremiah 13 - 20
609 BC	Jeremiah Prophesies against Egypt	Jeremiah 46
609 BC	Jeremiah Prophesies against Philistia	Jeremiah 47
594 BC	Jeremiah Prophesies against Moab	Jeremiah 48
594 BC	Jeremiah Prophesies against Ammon	Jeremiah 49
588 BC	Jeremiah's Conflicts	Jeremiah 21 - 33
588 BC	Jeremiah Prophesies Judgment on Judah	Jeremiah 34 - 45
586 BC	The Fall of Jerusalem	2 Kings 25, Jeremiah 52
586 BC	Jeremiah Prophesies against Babylon	Jeremiah 50, 51

God told Jeremiah to stand in the temple and preach these warnings. He told Jeremiah to not *soft sell* it or *candy coat* it.” Don’t change one word”. God told the people that Jerusalem would end up like Shiloh. What was Shiloh?

Shiloh

We are given a warning that Jerusalem will become *like Shiloh*. If you are not committed to understand each line you have to stop the bible bus right here and get out for a second and do some research before moving on. The word *Shiloh* appears 33 times in the Old Testament, and all but one usage refers to a city in Ephraim, about 24 miles north of Jerusalem. Joshua, Eli,

and Samuel were all associated with Shiloh, and the tabernacle was located there for a long time. Shiloh also means ‘the peaceful one’, associated with the messiah. A temple stood in Shiloh, an ancient town in Samaria, for a full 369 years. That is a very long time – far longer than the United States has been an independent country. While Shiloh’s fortunes varied over this time, it was the only place that served as a national religious center for the Jewish People during this period – the era of the Biblical Judges. Shiloh was secure during the time of Joshua and Samuel. After Joshua died things went downhill; and Shiloh gradually had less and less to do with the messiah. The wicked priest Eli and his awful sons completely mismanaged God’s business, and the Philistines took away the ark for a while. God’s public representatives were actually leading people to sin, and to resent God. The idea that Shiloh lost its role as the spiritual center is the main point. God had to wipe out the entire 10 tribal area as it had become rotten to the core. He only kept Judah in the south.



Shiloh was not the only time that the tabernacle moved. It moved 8 times in the wilderness journey. You might think that it was just random places of available water in route to Canaan. You have to realize that the entire 40 year journey could have been made in a few weeks or so.

What is the significance of the tabernacle moving from a place? It is interesting to look at all 8 times the tabernacle previously moved in the wilderness.

1. **Mt. Sinai to Paran /Numbers 10:12:** The children of Israel had just received the Law, and they fell into sin with the golden calf (Exodus 32). God told Moses that he would kill all of the Hebrews and start all over again with Moses (just like he did with Abraham). Moses interceded for his people and communed with God alone. The people were allowed to follow the cloud by day and fire by night from a distance. Moses made a deal that they could follow God. God had to keep his distance to keep from destroying them. He assigned the camping and marching and trumpet communications that were required to mobilize and camp.
 - a. The people had marched 3 days from Mount Sinai, and they began to complain (Numbers 11). God had to burn up some of the complainers with fire.
 - b. Then the non Hebrews in the group fell into lust

- c. Then the Hebrews started longing and moaning for fresh produce from Egypt. They complained about manna.
- d. The 70 elders were appointed to help Moses
- e. This transition marked the beginning of learning how God's people need to actually follow God's presence (walked behind pillar of cloud and fire without advanced notification).



2. From Paran to Kibroth-Hattaavah: Complaining amidst God's Provision (Numbers 11:34)

- a. Then the Hebrews were given quail until they were sick of it. Many people were buried there because of their cravings. Kibroth Hattavah means: 'graves of craving'. They people complained and God burned them with fire. The place was named Taberah (burning).
- b. This transition underscored the consequences of ingratitude and the lack of faith despite God's faithfulness to us.

3. From Kibroth-Hattaavah to Hazereth: Leadership and Unity (Numbers 11:35)

- a. Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses for marrying an Ethiopian woman. They challenged his leadership over themselves. Miriam became a leper.
- b. God made a reset to underscore who he has ordained for leadership and the importance of respecting that appointment

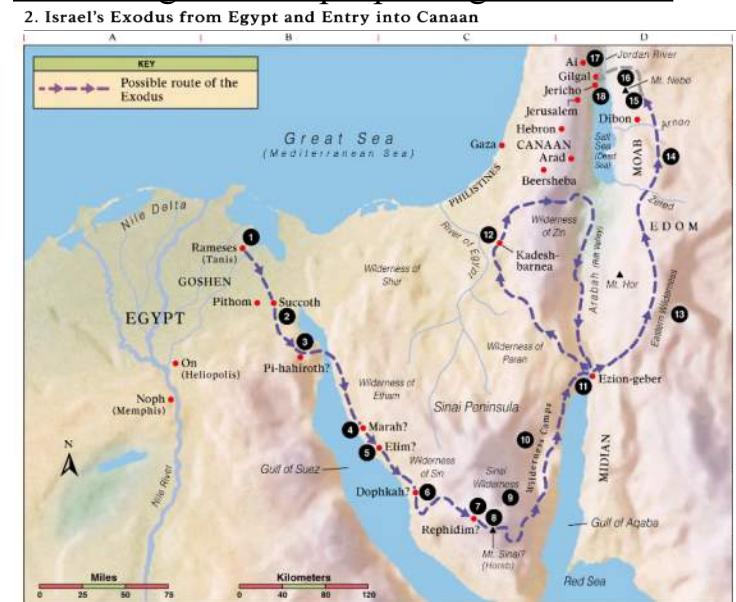
4. From Hazereth to the Wilderness of Paran (Rithmah).

- a. The spies bring back a faithless report of Canaan, and Hebrews want to go back to Egypt. Passage denied except Caleb and Joshua. Sentenced to die in the desert. They were close enough to enter Canaan at this early stage of wilderness wonderings.
- b. Attack of the Amalekites
- c. Korah's rebellion and loss of rebels. Follow on judgment of sympathizers over 14,000.
- d. This phase was only a series of circular wanderings because of disbelief. As believers we become ruined for the pleasures of this world...but if we do

not go all in with God, then we become truly lost and depressed and aimless. It illustrates stated faith verses real faith.

5. From Rithmah to Rimmon Perez and Onwards: Continued Wandering (Numbers 33:19-36)

- There were many short-term stops in this region. It was just a big circle.
- They departed from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon Perez.²⁰ They departed from Rimmon Perez and camped at Libnah.²¹ They moved from Libnah and camped at Rissah.²² They journeyed from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah.²³ They went from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Sheper.²⁴ They moved from Mount Sheper and camped at Haradah.²⁵ They moved from Haradah and camped at Makheloth.²⁶ They moved from Makheloth and camped at Tahath.²⁷ They departed from Tahath and camped at Terah.²⁸ They moved from Terah and camped at Mithkah.²⁹ They went from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah.³⁰ They departed from Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth.³¹ They departed from Moseroth and camped at Bene Jaakan.³² They moved from Bene Jaakan and camped at Hor Hagidgad.³³ They went from Hor Hagidgad and camped at Jotbathah.³⁴ They moved from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah.³⁵ They departed from Abronah and camped at Ezion Geber.³⁶ They moved from Ezion Geber and camped in the Wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh.
- Once the children of Israel completed this loop, they became organized and focused on crossing the Jordan. The sin and rebellion had subsided significantly. The prior generation had pretty much died out. It was as if God was making them do circles around the block until the last rebels died. He did not want to prematurely contaminate their resettlement.
- Disobedience and lack of faith has reached its end (nowhere); and God creates a new resurgence in a people as good as dead.



e.

6. From the Wilderness to the Plains of Moab: God's Faithfulness (Numbers 22:1; 33:48-49)

- Marked the end of wilderness wandering and a preparation for faithfulness

7. Crossing the Jordan into Gilgal: Fulfillment of Promise (Joshua 4:19)

8. From Gilgal to Shiloh: Stability and Worship (Joshua 18:1)

The point of all of this is that life is full of seasons. God is bringing us through a progression towards him.

Read Jeremiah 26:7-16: How do we react when presented with an unflattering truth about ourselves. Are we offended? Don't we usually find an equal or greater fault with whoever is being outspoken? What if the critique is coming from a donkey? I have had some very unspiritual people call me out. It is not a good feeling to discover that you have been playing for the wrong team. It happens. Repentance is not meant to be a comfortable acceptance. It is more like a knife or fingernails on a chalkboard. Here are a few things to remember when you receive an emotional disagreement that catches you off guard:

- Angry criticism almost always means the critic feels hurt in some way. You are dealing with emotions, not facts.
- Handle the situation in a way that you imagine someone both confident and poised would handle it.
- Interpretation is everything. I tend to generalize bad news (everything is falling apart). A critical comment can shake your confidence. Avoid over-interpretation and speculation.
- Perhaps folks just aren't ready for your work.

The main point is not about how good of a guy Jeremiah was. The people were rejecting God.

Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, “Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.” But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” So Samuel prayed to the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, “Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. (1 Samuel 8)

Read Jeremiah 26:17-24: If you are going to speak for God you have to stick with the script. Secondly, you need to expect rejection and hatred from some. You cannot worry about what will happen to yourself. That is God's part of the deal.