

INCOMPETENT LEADERSHIP: THE FAILURE OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Jeremiah 21—25; 27—29

Chapter 21 marks an abrupt change in the book. Jeremiah's personal conflict fades into the background. Historically there is a leap forward of possibly about twenty years to the closing years of Zedekiah's reign. Frequently, the oracles are stinging rebukes of failure levelled at both the civil and religious leadership. The corruption of Jehoiakim, the incompetence of Zedekiah, and the moral failure of the prophets stand evident for all to see.

ORACLES AGAINST THE KINGS OF JUDAH Jeremiah 21:1—23:8

Zedekiah's Request and Jeremiah's Reply (21:1-10)

Zedekiah's reign began in 597 BC. He was torn between the influence of Jeremiah, whom he secretly admired, and the nationalistic party that sought to throw off the yoke of Babylonian domination by a political-military alliance with Egypt and the surrounding smaller states. Zedekiah threatened to rebel against Babylon in 594-593 BC.¹ In 589 BC, with the accession of Pharaoh Hophra, Judah rebelled, and the end was near. The Babylonian troops soon arrived and blockaded Jerusalem. Jeremiah 21:1-10 took place during the blockade just prior to the final siege.

Zedekiah requested a favourable word from the Lord (vv. 1,2).² However, the negative answer came in two parts. First, Jeremiah informed the king that the Babylonian, not the Judean army would prosper (v. 4). The war was the product of a rash rebellion; the survivors of the horrible siege to come would be handed over to Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 6,7). The second part of the oracle was addressed to the people (vv. 8-10): in Deuteronomic terms (v. 8; cf. Deut. 30:15,19), they were offered a choice between "the way of life and the way of death." The way of life was that of surrender to the enemy. Courageously, Jeremiah spoke the unpleasant truth to king and people!

Standards for Kingship (21:11,12)

The royal house had been entrusted with the duty of administering (executing) justice (cf. Deut. 17:18-20). The

_____ reign began in _____ BC.

(Zedekiah's, 597)

The nationalistic party wanted to throw off the yoke of _____.

(Babylon)

In _____ BC Zedekiah rebelled.

(589)

_____ troops arrived and blockaded _____.

(Babylonian, Jerusalem)

Jeremiah prophesied the victory of _____.

(Babylon)

The "way of life" (21:8) was _____ to the _____.

(surrender, enemy)

stability of the nation (any nation) was dependent on the continual practice (cf. "every morning," v. 12) of this principle.

Oracle Against the Royalty (21:13,14)

These verses seemingly refer to the unfounded sense of security held by the national leadership. Their mountain valley was not secure: their weaponry and alliances would not deter the Babylonian victory.

Royal Responsibility and Warning (22:1-9)

The condemnation of the royal house jumps back to the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign (ca. 609 BC). The king and people alike are to "do justice and righteousness" (v. 3). This is the only hope for the continuation of the kingship (v. 4); the alternative will be destruction of the house of David (vv. 5-8). The reason for the judgement to come is clearly related to covenant violation and idolatry (v. 9).

Lament over Shallum (Jehoahaz) (22:10-12)

"Do not weep for the dead or mourn for him" (v. 10a) refers to Josiah whose untimely death at Megiddo in 609 BC began the disastrous slide toward national destruction. Rather, Jeremiah says, weep for Shallum, who was taken in exile to Egypt,

For he will never return
Or see his native land
(v. 10; cf. 2 Kings 23:31-34).

Judgement on Jehoiakim (22:13-19)

Josiah, the father of this king, was just; Jehoiakim was unjust. Jeremiah singled out his exploitation of his neighbour when he built himself a pretentious and "roomy" (i.e., great) house (v. 14). Forcing subjects to work without pay was the hated *corvée* instituted by Solomon. Sarcastically, the prophet asks if expensive cedar paneling makes a king? The king was a selfish tyrant; Jeremiah prophesied that when he died no one would grieve for him (v. 18). His would be a "donkey's burial" in the city dump instead of a royal funeral like that given his respected father.

A Dirge over Jerusalem (22:20-23)

The date is probably about 598 BC. The city was soon

The stability of a nation is dependent on the administration of _____.
(justice)

Judean royalty considered security to be found in _____ and _____.
(weapons, alliances)

"Do not weep for the dead or mourn him . . ." (22:10a) refers to _____.
(Josiah)

Is the following statement true or false?
At Jehoiakim's death no one would grieve for him.

(true)

What would be the fate of Jehoiakim?

(Compare your answer with the text)

to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar and face the first Babylonian captivity. The deeply moving lament personifies Jerusalem as a woman who is told to go up in the mountains and mourn her fate. Jehoiakim, who rebelled against Babylonian dominance, died prior to the arrival of the enemy troops. Jehoiachin reigned three months and surrendered only to be deported to Babylon.

Oracles against Jehoiachin (22:24-30)

Two oracles are included in this section. The first (vv. 24-27) states that the young king and his mother are going into captivity, never to return. Coniah (v. 24) is a shortened form of Jeconiah, the king's personal name. The king was imprisoned thirty-seven years in Babylon (2 Kings 25:27). The second oracle (vv. 27-30) states that none of his descendants will sit on David's throne. The term "childless" (v. 30) is a technical term referring to dynastic succession: 1 Chronicles 3:17 lists seven sons. None of these appear in the list of the kings of Judah.

False Kings and the Ideal King (23:1-8)

Previous oracles in chapter 22 have been directed against Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jehoiachin. Now it is Zedekiah's turn! Although his name is not used directly, verse 6 gives a literary allusion with a play on his name: the name of the ideal king to come literally means "the Lord is our righteousness"; Zedekiah's name means "the Lord is my king." Jeremiah seemingly pitied the weak vassal king and did not make a frontal attack on him. The word "shepherds" (v. 1) was commonly used for the political leaders and was descriptive of their role and responsibility. Although the oracle realistically presented judgement (doom) on Judah's leaders, the predominant note is that of hope. From weak Zedekiah, placed on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar, the prophet's vision jumped to "a righteous Branch" (first used in Isaiah 11:1). Jeremiah used the term in a technical sense: a longed-for Messianic figure (cf. Jer. 33:14-16; Zech. 3:8). The Branch, as a righteous ruler, would succeed in fulfilling the covenant relationship; consequently, the age of peace and security would be realized. This new king of the Davidic line would institute a "new exodus" which would replace the old Exodus in glory and memory (vv. 7,8). Evidently, the new covenant concept of Jeremiah (cf. Jer. 31) was taking formal shape. Centuries later, the New Testament writers would anchor their interpretation of Jesus solidly on these basic principles. Jeremiah based his hope for the future in God and not on man!

MATCH the following:

Jehoiachin	short for Jeconiah
Coniah	reigned three months
Jehoiakim	name means "the Lord is my king"
Zedekiah	rebelled against Babylonian dominance

(Compare your answers with the text)

The term "childless" (22:30) refers to _____

 (dynastic succession)

_____ was the term commonly used for political leaders.
 (Shepherds)

Jeremiah called the longed-for Messiah a _____

 (righteous Branch)

The Messianic king would be of the lineage of _____

 (David)

UNDERLINE the correct answer.

Jeremiah based his hope of the future in God, man.
 (God)

ORACLES AGAINST THE PROPHETS OF JUDAH Jeremiah 23:9-40

Jeremiah's words turned now from the incompetent political leaders to the tragic situation found among the religious leaders. Born into a priestly family, he was called to be a prophet. Although opposed by both priest and prophet, his strongest attack was made against the prophets of his day. Probably the date falls toward the end of his ministry; consequently, his polemic offers perhaps the best evaluation of true and false prophecy found in the Old Testament. As for his contemporaries, he looks at their conduct (vv. 9-15), their message (vv. 16-32), and their fate (vv. 33-40).

The Crises of Integrity (23:9-15)

In contrast to the holiness and purity of God, the prophets had no moral conviction or restraints. The condition profoundly affected Jeremiah: "My heart is broken . . . my bones tremble . . ." (v. 9). He who delivers God's Word should live in accordance with that Word: he who does not live in accordance to the Word has no access to it! The people willingly followed the immoral example: like prophet, like people. Adultery, both physical and spiritual, abounded (vv. 10-12). In addition, they were liars and strengthened the hands of evildoers (v. 14). The land was morally and spiritually corrupt (like Sodom and Gomorrah, cf. Gen. 18:20—19:11); therefore, bitter punishment was coming (vv. 13-15).

The Indictment of the False Prophets (23:16-22)

Jeremiah warns the people not to "listen to" (i.e., hear and obey) the religious leaders (v. 16). He gives four reasons why: (1) they are leading into "futility," i.e., false hope; (2) they speak from their own "heart," i.e., mind or will, and not from the Lord; (3) they encourage those who reject God's Word, promising false "peace"; and (4) they encourage disobedience in those who stubbornly walk in their way by saying "calamity will not come upon you." They were preaching what the people wanted to hear, not what God revealed. Their problem was that they had not been "in the council of the Lord" (v. 18). The "council" implies a close personal fellowship in a consultative assembly of intimate associates which results in obedient service (cf. Amos 3:7). Because of the prophets' disobedience, "the storm of the Lord has gone forth" (v. 19; cf. Jonah 1:4) and "in the last days you will clearly understand it" (v. 20). In summary, the false prophet was not commissioned by Yahweh (v. 21a), was not inspired (v. 21b), had no personal encounter with God (v. 22a), did not rebuke sin and did not call the people to repentance (v. 22b).

The prophets were guilty of _____ ,
_____ and supporting _____ .
(adultery, lying, evildoers)

Why should the people not listen to the false prophets?

They led to _____

They spoke _____

They promised _____

They encouraged _____

(futility, from their own heart, false peace, disobedience)

The false prophet was not _____ by
_____, was not _____, had no
_____, did not
_____, and did not call to
_____.

(commissioned, Yahweh, inspired, personal encounter, rebuke sin, repentance)

The Nature of a True Prophet (23:23-32)

The true prophet inevitably has an encounter with God who is near to His own and empowers. Furthermore, the true prophet is accountable to God (vv. 23,24). God is not a local deity limited in scope; neither is He one with whom overfamiliarity produces contempt—He is “near” and “far off.” The false prophets claim that their message originates in God (v. 25);³ however, they “prophecy falsehood . . . the deception of their own heart” (v. 26);⁴ the true prophet speaks the Word of God (vv. 28,29). The Word of God is a dynamic reality, a power (“like a hammer”), that refines (“like fire”), purifies, and produces results even independently from the personality of the prophet. The true prophet has access to God’s Word and has no need to “steal” God’s “words” from another,⁵ or rely on false dreams (vv. 30-32). “Reckless boasting,” e.g., “loose talk” plus the “ministerial tone,” does not automatically constitute true prophecy!

The Fate of the False Prophets (23:33-40)

The misuse of the prophetic office brought it into disrepute. The word “oracle” means “a burden”: in a strong wordplay the false prophet has become the burden (vv. 33-36) and will be destroyed.

THE TWO BASKETS OF FIGS Jeremiah 24:1-10

This oracle was delivered in 597 BC following the deportation of Jehoiachin (v. 1; cf. 2 Kings 24:10-15). It is important in the development of Jeremiah’s future hope. Contrary to the popular interpretation, the prophet declared that the best element (“good figs”) had been carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar. Those left behind (“bad figs”) were declared to be of the lower class and less capable. Because they refused to learn the divine lesson, they would not be the “remnant” on which the future would be built (v. 8). The exiles were the source of hope (v. 6). Those in the land would be totally destroyed (vv. 9-10).

THE VISITATION OF THE END Jeremiah 25:1-38

The fourth year of Jehoiakim, 605 BC (v. 1), was decisive in Jeremiah’s life (v. 3) and in world history: Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish and became the virtual master of the Near East. The foe from the North was clearly identifiable, and the time was more urgent than ever.

The true prophet is _____ to God
and is not _____ with
God.

(accountable, overly familiar)

The message of the false prophets comes from their
own _____.

(deception)

The Word of God is a _____ that
_____, _____ and produces
_____.

(power, refines, purifies, results)

The true prophet has no need to _____
God’s _____ from another; neither does
_____ constitute true
prophecy.

(steal, words, reckless boasting)

According to footnote 4 what two tests does
Deuteronomy offer to help distinguish between “true”
and “false” prophets?

The test of _____

The test of _____

*(the nature or consistency of the word, time or
fulfillment)*

Jeremiah declared that the _____ figs had been
carried captive by _____.

(good, Nebuchadnezzar)

UNDERLINE the correct answer.

The remnant would come from the priests, exiles,
civil leaders.

(exiles)

Continued Disobedience and the Coming Judgement (25:1-14)

This section contains a summary of Jeremiah's twenty-three years of preaching (vv. 3-7). He states his oft-repeated message that Yahweh, the God of the Covenant, has constantly warned the people through his prophets (v. 4; cf. 2 Kings 17:13ff.); however, as before, the call to repentance and renewal went unheeded. Now Yahweh, the Lord of history, announces that Nebuchadnezzar will be His instrument of punishment on faithless Judah (vv. 8-14); also, at the end of seventy years Babylon will be punished for her iniquity (v. 12).

The Cup of God's Wrath (25:15-38)

Yahweh, the God of justice, will make Judah and the surrounding nations drink a "cup of the wine of wrath . . . And they shall . . . stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them" (vv. 15,16; cf. 17-28). "The Lord has a controversy with the nations. He is entering into judgment with all flesh . . ." (v. 31). A "great storm" (i.e., Nebuchadnezzar) "is being stirred up" (v. 32). Once again Jeremiah reaffirms the truth of God's control over the affairs of men.

CONFLICT WITH THE RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP Jeremiah 26:1—29:32)

The Temple Sermon and Arrest (26:1-24)

The discussion of this section is included with that of chapter 7.

The Symbolic Sermon: The Yoke of Babylon (27:1—28:17)

There is a close relationship between chapters 26—29 reflecting the antagonism between Jeremiah and the official circle of prophets. The background is familiar: the captivity and Exile of 597 BC was a reality. Zedekiah had been placed on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar. Chapters 27 and 28 treat the fourth year of his reign, approximately 594/3 BC, when representatives from surrounding nations met in Jerusalem to plan a revolt against Babylon. The symbol of the yoke was used by both Jeremiah and Hananiah in prophetic discourses.

A message to neighbouring kings (27:1-11)

Jeremiah demonstrates his ability as a prophet and

IDENTIFY the following:

"cup of wrath"	"burden"
"great storm"	God's anger
bad figs	Nebuchadnezzar
oracle	lower class people

(Compare your answers with the text)

statesman in an excellent sermon that was both symbolic in action and powerful in speech. The message was addressed to six kings (v. 3). Yahweh, the Creator of the earth, has the right to give it to whom He pleases (v. 5): Nebuchadnezzar was His choice (v. 6). Destruction would be the fate of the nation that refuses to accept the yoke of Babylon (v. 8).

A message to Zedekiah (27:12-15)

Still wearing the yoke, Jeremiah appeals to king Zedekiah not to become involved in a revolt doomed to failure. He also denounces the lies of the voices that prophesied success in the venture.

A message to the priests and people (27:16-22)

Evidently there was continued concern for the return of Jehoiachin, considered by many to be the legitimate king. Also, there was a deep desire for the return of the temple vessels taken to Babylon. The nationalistic prophets were announcing the immediate return of independence, the exiled king and the temple furnishing. Jeremiah denounced this as an empty hope that would only increase the Babylonian pressure and new losses (vv. 21,22).

Jeremiah's clash with Hananiah (28:1-17)

Hananiah refutes Jeremiah's words and claims that God would restore Jehoiachin and the vessels within two years (vv. 1-4). Jeremiah responds (vv. 5-9): "Amen! May the Lord do so . . ." He, too, desired the same (v. 6); however, he does not withdraw his word. He knew that only sincere repentance could alter the situation. He then adds that the test of the prophetic word lies in its fulfillment (v. 9). Symbolically, Hananiah broke the yoke from Jeremiah's neck (vv. 10,11). Jeremiah left (v. 11c); however, the Lord spoke to him again, and he returned with the divine message that the yoke of wood would be replaced by one of iron: the nations would serve Nebuchadnezzar (v. 14). As for Hananiah, God had not sent him, and he would die within the year (v.16). In the seventh month of that year Hananiah the prophet died (v. 17). It is a dangerous thing to oppose God and His Word! The confrontation began in the fifth month (v. 1); final judgement was not long in coming.

Communication with the Exiles in Babylon (29:1-32)

Prophetic opposition to Jeremiah was not restricted to Hananiah. From Babylon (cf. 2 Kings 24:10-17) came word that there were those prophesying a speedy return to the homeland (cf. v. 21; also vv. 24-28). Jeremiah dealt with them in a similar fashion as he had with Hananiah (vv. 4-9). Jeremiah tells the people to "build houses," "plant gardens," "take wives," and "seek the welfare of the city" (vv. 4-7). The captivity will last "seventy years" (v. 10; cf.

In chapter 27, Jeremiah addressed a sermon to _____ ; they were urged to accept the _____ of Babylon.

(six kings, yoke)

Symbolically Jeremiah wore a _____ before King Zedekiah.

(yoke)

Jeremiah had a dispute with the prophet _____

(Hananiah)

Jeremiah announced the wooden yoke would be replaced by a _____ of _____.

(yoke, iron)

Jer. 25:12). The exiles must face reality and not allow circumstances to govern their lives and future. God has His plans for the future (v. 11). The Exile was according to God's purposes. The people were not separated from Him in the Exile (vv. 12-14).

Verses 15-19 repeat the oracle found in 24:8-10. Those in Judah are like rotten figs. The future rests with those in Babylon.

Verses 20-23 call on the people to hear the authentic words of the Lord and not those of the false prophets, Ahab and Zedekiah. In addition to their false words, they were immoral men (v. 23). How could they receive divine oracles in the face of their sinful life-style?

Another, Shemaiah (v. 24) had written to Zephaniah (Jer. 21:1; 37:3), the head of the temple police, asking why he had not silenced Jeremiah (v. 27). Apparently Zephaniah was sympathetic to Jeremiah and read the letter to him. Jeremiah evidently wrote a second letter and denounced Shemaiah as a false prophet (vv. 30-32).

Following Green,⁶ the letters reveal Jeremiah's courage and his faith in the future. They also indicate that true faith is not dependent on a person's geographic location or physical circumstances. Furthermore, in calling for prayer for the enemy (Babylonians), the prophet amazingly moves toward the teachings of Jesus (cf. Matthew 5:44).

What was Jeremiah's evaluation of the Exile in 29:11-14?

(Compare your answer with the text)

What was Shemaiah's complaint to Zephaniah?

(Compare your answer with the text)

Are the following statements true or false?

True faith is not dependent on location or circumstances. _____

Jeremiah did not call for prayer for the enemy. _____

(true, false)

Endnotes

¹Ezekiel was called to his prophetic ministry in Babylon in this period. He had been carried captive to Babylon in 597 BC, along with King Jehoiachin. Zedekiah had been placed on the throne of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar as a puppet king following Jehoiachin's surrender.

²He desired an oracle of divine protection similar to that of Isaiah in 701 BC when Assyria besieged Jerusalem (cf. Isa. 36-37; 2 Kings 18-19).

³The thrust here is not against dreams as a means of divine revelation. Scripture indicates God's use of this medium, as in the case of Jacob (Gen. 28:12) and Daniel (7:1); also cf. Joel 2:28 and Matthew 2:12,13).

⁴The Old Testament does not use the expression "false prophet," rather "prophets who prophesy falsehood." Two prophets could speak opposing words as in the case of Jeremiah and Hananiah (Jer. 28): both were considered prophets. How could the people distinguish between them? Deuteronomy offers two suggestions: (1) the test of the nature of the word and its consistency with God's past revelation (Deut. 13:1-5); and (2) the test of "time" or fulfillment (Deut. 18:18-22). In particular situations it is difficult to differentiate between the "true" and "false" word. Time alone will be the ultimate judge! Dr. James Leo Green, "Jeremiah," in *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, ed. by Clifton J. Allen (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), p. 127, suggests some additional helps taken from the Book of Jeremiah: the call and communion experiences mark a true prophet as opposed to the false prophet; the true prophet is conscious of and sensitive to sin in himself and in society. The false prophet has no such sensitivity and frequently is guilty of deliberate personal sin. The true prophet can properly interpret events in the light of God's eternal purposes. The false prophet is blinded by personal ambition, greed, false patriotism and bad theology; the true prophet recognizes the conditional nature of prophecy—God's sovereign will is for man's salvation dependent on human response. The false prophet has no conditional element in his prophecy: for him God is automatically obligated to His people. The true prophet is honest and ever open to truth: respectfully he weighs the evidence. The false prophet sees only one side and is dogmatic in his assertion of his absolute truth and authority.

⁵The true prophet preaches his own God-given sermons and does not have to rely on sermons prepared by others and taken from books of sermons.

⁶Green, "Jeremiah," p. 144.

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). Read the study guide and answer the following questions:

1. What was the hope for the kingship (and nation)?

2. Which king was taken captive to Egypt?

3. What was Jeremiah's accusation against Jehoiakim?

4. What does the name of the ideal king mean?

5. How should the person who delivers God's Word live?

6. What does the term "council" imply (Jer. 23:18)?

7. The Old Testament does not use the expression "false prophets." How does it refer to them?

8. Indicate some additional qualities of a true prophet as suggested by Dr. Green?

9. What was God stirring up in the Cup of Wrath?

10. What were the nationalistic prophets announcing?

11. What was Hananiah's symbolic act?

12. What was the fate of Hananiah (Jer. 28:16,17)?

13. What was Jeremiah's advice to the exiles in Babylon?

Supplementary activity (*Levels 2 and 3*). For questions 1—15 read 2 Kings 24—25; 2 Chronicles 36; John Bright, *A History of Israel*, pages 327-331, in order to discuss the last days of Judah. Answer the following questions:

1. What was the relationship of Zedekiah to Jehoiachin and Josiah?
2. Characterize the reign of Zedekiah.
3. Indicate the extent of the territory ruled by Zedekiah.
4. How many people were deported in 597 BC? How can you reconcile the numbers given by Kings and Jeremiah?
5. Discuss the rival dynastic hopes that surfaced during the period.
6. What was the nature and effect of the Babylonian crisis of 595—594 BC?
7. How did Jeremiah react to the popular prophetic evaluation of the crisis?
8. What were the final results of the crisis?
9. What internal and international factors prompted Zedekiah's rebellion in 588 BC?
10. What countries apparently joined in the revolt?
11. When and why did the Babylonian army temporarily lift the siege of Jerusalem?
12. Describe the last days of Jerusalem and the fate of Zedekiah.
13. When and how was Jerusalem destroyed?
14. Who was Gedaliah? What was his family background and previous administrative experience?
15. Describe the governorship of Gedaliah and his fate.
16. Why do you think that the small remnant fled to Egypt?
17. Why does Bright consider the destruction of Jerusalem and the Exile to be the great watershed of Israel's history?
18. Discuss the conditions in Judah following the fall of Jerusalem.
19. Discuss the conditions and influence of the remnant living in Babylon.
20. Discuss the life and influence of the refugees in Egypt.

Advanced activity (*Level 3*). For a discussion between true and false prophets read the following: Jeremiah 5:30,31; 6:13-15; 8:10-12; 23:9-40; 14:13-16; 28:1-17; 29:4-32; 1 Kings 22; Micah 3:5-8; 1 Samuel 9:6; Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:17-22; Numbers 12:6-8; the text on 23:23-32 and footnote 4; also, consult a Bible encyclopedia or dictionary; John Bright, *a History of Israel*, pages 264-266; cf., John Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*, pages 185-200. NOTE: (1) it is impossible to study the divine Word without relating it to the revelation of God in history; (2) laws and prophetic oracles constitute the two principle forms which the Word assumes; (3) the prophetic word does not question the ancient authority of the inspired words of the Law; the essential kinship of the prophet with the priest was greater than that which separated them; (4) the Old

Testament uses the expression “prophets who prophesy falsehood,” not false prophets. Answer the following questions:

1. What were the charges Jeremiah levelled against the prophets and priests of his day?
2. How was false prophecy related to ancient Israelite prophecy?
3. Why was Samuel considered a true prophet?
6. What external similarities existed between true and false prophets?
5. Was Jeremiah labeled as a false prophet?
6. Evaluate the encounter of Jeremiah and Hananiah. Did Jeremiah appear at any time to have personal misgivings over his inspiration?
7. Evaluate the tests presented in Deuteronomy 13 and 18. How is the written Word (Law) seeking to control the unrestrained freedom of prophesying?
8. In Jeremiah 23, name three factors found in false prophecy (see vv. 13,14,17,30,32).
9. Discuss Jeremiah’s test of morality.
10. Interpret Jeremiah 23:23,24 with Psalm 139:1-10.

Optional Supplementary Reading

R. E. Clements, *Old Testament Theology*, pages 131-154.

Seminar Discussion

Read Walter Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, pages 423-443. Discuss the following:

1. Discuss the element of guilt as a consequence of sin.
2. Discuss the prophetic concept of punishment as a consequence of sin.
3. What place did punishment play in the Law?