

Jeremiah is not easily outlined but the following outline will help.

- I. Title 1:1-3
- II. Call of Jeremiah 1:4-19
- III. Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem 2-25
- IV. Jeremiah vs. False Prophets 26-29
- V. Promises of Restoration 30-33
- VI. The Days of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah 34-39
- VII. After the Fall of Jerusalem 40-45
- VIII. Oracles against the nations 46-51
- IX. Historical Appendix 52

What complicates this is that the book is not written in strict chronological order nor in an easily discerned topological order. I think it relates the *discussions of the prophet during his most critical years* and in the arguments of those years his discussion ranges back and forth through all the previous debates and confrontations...like a man telling his son the episodes of his life as he arranges them to meet troubles in the son's life. Not clear, eh? Well that is what makes it hard to outline. The simplest outline is:

- I. The Lord's word to Judah 1-45
- II. The Lord's word to the Gentile nations 46-51
- III. The Lord's word to history 52

Still not very satisfactory but you will have to admit it is concise.

Regarding the history of redemption, the new covenant (31) is probably the most familiar of Jeremiah's many theological themes. This new covenant is a divine work in the hearts of Israel's people. God, recognizing their inability to keep the covenant in their own strength, changes them (regenerates them) so that they will be able to live aright. This is quoted in Hebrews 8:8-12.

Another major theme in the book of Jeremiah is the covenant lawsuit. This is a formula used by the prophets to voice the Lord's complaints and charges against Israel and Judah. There are many examples in Jeremiah: Jeremiah 2-3 is excellent. Although it is lacking the usual call to the heavens and earth to act as witnesses (cf. Isa. 1:2), it does have the rhetorical questions of complaint (2:5), a declaration of the charges (2:9), a description of the sins of the people (2:13) and a prediction of the judgment to come (2:35b-37). Here, too, is the constant cry for national and personal repentance so characteristic of Jeremiah *3:12-13, 19, 22).

Jeremiah also emphasizes the necessity of a personal walk with the Lord (1:5; 11:19; 15; 19) and uses the images of betrothal and marriage (which he may have derived from Hosea) to describe the nation's relationship with the Lord (2:2; 31:32, etc.). With this Jeremiah is strong for God's sovereignty and the importance of an absolute submission to the known will of God.

Some questions such as these arise in our study: Is all of Jeremiah poetry, some of which we don't yet recognize? If Jeremiah 51:64 is true, who wrote chapter 52 and why was it added to the rest of the book? How can Jeremiah's prophecy of a seventy year exile (29:10) match what we know of Israelite history? Did Jeremiah also write Lamentations...and what is the actual role of Baruch in the writings and ministry of Jeremiah.

Archaeological notes regarding Jeremiah include the fact that in 587 only three fortified cities were still holding out against the Babylonian army of Nebuchadnezzar--Jerusalem, Azekah, and Lachish (34:8).