Week 3 - The Promise of return from Exile + Book of Lamentations

Introduction: Jeremiah the Prophet:

- The Old Testament contains 17 prophetic books (Splits into major and minor prophets based on the size of the book)
- Major Prophets (5 books): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel
- Minor Prophets (12 books): Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachai
- **Time of Birth:**
  - Jeremiah was born in the mid-seventh century BC during the reign of the wicked King Manasseh. Coming from a priestly family, Jeremiah was familiar with the Law and God's works among His people. Having lived during the reigns of the wicked Manasseh and his equally wicked son Amon, Jeremiah witnessed the moral and spiritual corruption of both the king and the people. God later called him to confront these evils.
  - The prophet Baruch was Jeremiah's disciple, who recorded many of his prophecies.
- **Place of Birth:**
  - Jeremiah was born in the village of Anathoth, located northeast of Jerusalem
- **God's Call:**
  - God called Jeremiah to service through a vision when he was still young. His mission was to rebuke the evil of the king, leaders, priests, and people.
  - Jeremiah lived a celibate life as commanded by the Lord.
- **Titles:**
  - **The Weeping Prophet**: because of his sorrow over the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah prophesied before, during, and after the Babylonian exile
  - **The Job of the Prophets**: Jeremiah endured intense suffering, including rejection by his people, betrayal by his own brother, physical torture, and imprisonment.
- **The Book of Lamentations:**
  - **Author:** The prophet Jeremiah
  - **Time of writing:** Immediately after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC
  - **Place of writing:** Jerusalem
  - **Purpose of the book:**
    - To emphasize God's justice, which must prevail as punishment for sin
    - Call for repentance
    - Offer hope in God's mercy and seeking forgiveness
  - **Sections:** It was written in poetic form across five chapters

Outline:

- **Chapters 30–33**: Prophecies of hope and restoration, the New Covenant, and God's promises to bring His people back from exile.
- **Chapters 34–45**: Historical events surrounding the exile, including the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple.
- **Chapters 46–52**: Prophecies against the nations, including Egypt and Babylon.
- **Book of Lamentations: Chapter 1-5**
  - **Chapter 1:** Jerusalem, the weeping widow
  - **Chapter 2:** God's wrath upon Jerusalem
  - **Chapter 3:** Lamentations over God's discipline of His people
  - **Chapter 4:** Discipline followed by judgement
  - **Chapter 5:** Seeking God's mercy

Reading:

- The Book of Jeremiah chapters 30-52
  - Prophecies of hope and restoration, the New Covenant, and God's promises to bring His people back from exile.
    - Read Jeremiah Chapter 30: 1-11
    - Read Jeremiah Chapter 31: 1-11, 31-34
  - The fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple.
    - Read Jeremiah Chapter 52: 12-23
- The Book of Lamentations
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    - Read chapter 3:22-33
- **Outline**:
  Resources:
  - Father Luke Maher - Audio (Arabic)
  - Father Dawood Lemay- Audio (Arabic)
  - Commentary on the Book of Jeremiah (English) Fr. Tadros Malaty. PDF: 024_Jeremiah.pdf
  - Father Dawood-Book of Jeremiah
  - Father Dawood-Book of Lamentations
- **Key verse(s):**
  "You shall be My people, and I will be your God." Jeremiah 30:22

- **Comments**
  - **Hope and restoration of Israel**
    - **Jeremiah Chapters 30-33**
      God tells Jeremiah to write his prophecies in a book because this is not the end of Israel, but rather a period of discipline. Afterward, God will visit them, bring them back from captivity, and this time of discipline will lead to Israel's

repentance. God, in His mercy, will visit those who will seek Him and will restore their captivity.
    - Here’s how God will arrange this:
        - Discipline: Chapter 30:11
          After the people's corruption, God will deliver them into captivity through Babylon.
        - Mercy: chapter 31:3-4
          In His mercy, God will gather His people and bring them back from captivity. God will not only restore them but also bless them abundantly, leading them to praise Him with all their hearts.
        - Repentance: Chapter 31:9-10
          In response to all this, a person can only thank God for His blessings, understand the reason for the trial, and give thanks for it.
        - The Coming of Christ: Chapter 33:15
          The new David—the King who will reign forever.
        - The New Covenant: Chapter 31:31-34
          The New Covenant of grace, salvation, and the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.
- **The fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple.**
    - **Jeremiah chapters 34-45**
        - God instructed Jeremiah to warn King Zedekiah that Jerusalem will fall to the Babylonians and the city will be burned
        - Jeremiah instructed Baruch to write down a scroll of prophecies, warning of Jerusalem's destruction, but King Jehoiakim burns the scroll, rejecting God's message.
            - Baruch is a Hebrew name meaning "blessed." He was a disciple of Jeremiah and recorded his prophecies. After this, he went to Babylon and wrote a book of his own "Book of Baruch), which is part of the Deuterocanonical books.
        - Then, Jeremiah was thrown into prison by the officials for prophesying that the Babylonians will capture Jerusalem.
        - Jeremiah was then thrown into a dungeon, but was rescued later by Ebed-Melech, Ethiopian eunuch and was brought back the King Zedekiah.
        - Jeremiah prophesied again to King Zedekiah that surrendering to the Babylonians is the only way to survive." Chapter 38:17
        - The Babylonians break through the city walls, capturing Jerusalem. After the fall of Jerusalem, the Babylonian captain of the guard, Nebuzaradan, released Jeremiah from prison and gave him freedom.
        - The people asked Jeremiah to pray to the Lord for guidance to flee to Egypt. God warned them not to go to Egypt, as it will lead to their destruction. They refuse to listen.
        - Jeremiah rebuked the people for continuing to worship idols in Egypt, despite God’s previous judgment on Judah.
- **Prophecy about the fall of Babylon and return from Exile**
    - **Chapters 50-52**
        - God declares judgment on Babylon for its arrogance and idolatry.

        - Israel and Judah are promised redemption and restoration.
        - (Recap) The fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple. Chapter 52
- **Book of Lamentations:**
    - In the 12th hour of Good Friday, we read Chapter 3:1-66 from the book of Lamentations, commemorating the burial of Christ after His death on the cross. This chapter serves as a symbol of Christ, crushed with sufferings for our sake, we who are sinners.
        - Chapter 3:22-33
            - Jeremiah sees the grace bestowed upon him, recognizing that although many of God’s people have perished and the remaining have suffered greatly, the entire nation has not been destroyed. The sins of the people warranted the death of all, but God’s mercies preserved a remnant of His people, giving them the opportunity to repent so that He may bless them.

Review/recap questions:

**Servant may add more questions

- God promises that Israel's captivity is not the end but a period of discipline. He assures their return, repentance, and restoration through His mercy.
- Jeremiah warns of the fall of Jerusalem due to the people's sin and disobedience.
- God declares judgment on Babylon for its arrogance and idolatry while promising redemption and restoration for Israel and Judah.
- The Book of Lamentations (Read on Good Friday) Chapter 3:1-66 is read during the Twelfth Hour. It reflects on God's mercy, and offers hope in repentance and restoration.

Homework:

**Servant may add more questions

- “You shall be My _____, And I will be _____ God” Jeremiah 30:22
- With whom will God make His new covenant? chapter 31
- David was before the time of Jeremiah so what does God mean by “David their king whom I will
  raise up for them.” Chapter 30
- Which chapter of the book of Lamentations do we read on Good Friday? in which hour?

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