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A PLAN FOR TEACHING THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

TO

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

By

PAUL F. BARKMAN

A.B., Bethel College

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF SACRED THEOLOGY
in
The Biblical Seminary in New York

New York, N.Y.
April 1946

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Dedicated to
"Fredie", my wife,
on her birthday.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A PLAN FOR TEACHING THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

TO

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject

1. The Subject Stated.

This paper proposes to set forth a plan to guide an instructor in teaching the book of Jeremiah to Senior high school students—preferably students in the eleventh or twelfth grades. It is arranged in eighteen individual lessons, intended to cover the eighteen class sessions of the usual school term.

2. The Significance and Justification of the Subject.

The prophets help us to understand our age. These times are what have been called a "fluid age", in which there are almost perpetual crises of both national and international magnitude, with resultant great demands upon the individual personality to face a variety of new and changing situations. The Rev. Allen Richardson says:

" . . . only the mind which has learnt to read the language of the Bible can understand the events of these stirring days; only the man who has understood the message of the biblical prophets in the great crises of far-away Samaria and Judea will recognize the signs of the times. The inhabitants of the world may learn righteousness when God's judgements are in the earth, but only if they have listened to the thunder in the

"voices of the prophets of the Old Covenant. ." ¹

Adolescents need such help. This is particularly true of early and middle adolescents. To them the world is a confusion of voices even in the best of times. In these times of rapid change and warring movements of thought the "What", "Why", and "How" of life become even more perplexing. The result is too often a cynicism which gives the "Oh yeah?" to all standards of conduct, or which responds with a diffident and hopeless "So what?" Adolescents both need and seek a firm rock on which to base their judgements and conduct.

The life and times of Jeremiah are particularly suitable to help them find such standards. In the persons and teachings of the great prophets there is much to help them find a sound basis for their standards. In the life of Jeremiah there are at least three reasons why this is true.

The first reason is that he lived in times very similar to our own. They were times of international strife, domestic political turmoil, religious decay and indifference, and of social injustice. In the events recorded in his book are to be found many instances which are strikingly parallel to events contemporary to the lives of high school students. Given a change of ancient names to modern names and an explanation of their significance to the times, and the history of this book becomes surprisingly alive to

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1. Allen Richardson: Preface to Bible Study, p. 15.

the student.

Secondly, Jeremiah tells us more about his own thinking and personal reactions than any other prophet. Here we find a real person, with our own strengths and weaknesses--no demi-god of superhuman proportions--face to face with many problems such as we meet, winning his way through them and leaving us thereby an understandable and most inspiring example.

Miss Mary Anne Moore tells us that:

"Leaders of youth need to instill ideas of moral courage and of responsibility, so that when the stress of temptation comes, the boys and girls will be able to say No, and will feel responsible not only for their own acts but for those of their friends and associates." ¹

The example of Jeremiah lends itself readily to such teaching.

The third reason is that the teachings of Jeremiah are not only the product of experience in situations similar to our own, but they are a sure pronouncement of truth for all time in that they are the revealed "thus saith the Lord". Herein lies an unshakable standard in the midst of a world of changing values. It should not be taught primarily as a commandment, because youth hates commandments given for their own sake, but it may be advantageously presented as a homing place for the searcher after truth, and a reliable foundation upon which to build godly character.

The choice of a book rather than a topic was made for the following reasons.

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1. Mary Anne Moore, Senior Method in the Church School, p. 151.

A book has a literary unity. It was so intended by its author and is so received by the mind of the student. It is a complete work, carrying through a complete and relatively independent message.

The events and teachings of a book are more easily related to one another than isolated passages from many backgrounds and contexts. For advanced students of the Bible such backgrounds and contexts may more readily take on their proper significance, but the average high school student has enough difficulty in keeping one prophet clearly in his mind without trying to skip from one to another, or even from one age to another.

Narrative is one of the clearest methods of teaching. It also holds the interest of the student better than most other methods. The book of Jeremiah offers these advantages because it tells the story of a man's life.

Finally, in a book the student has a body of material to which he can later easily refer. An aggregation of passages on a subject is easily forgotten, and unless the syllabus is near at hand it is difficult to find such passages later for review or for re-study. A book is always at hand as an easy-to-find unit.

The book of Isaiah might have suggested itself for this study if it were not for two things. Jeremiah is more narrative and contains less of that difficult didactic poetry which characterizes large sections of Isaiah. Furthermore, there seem to the writer to be fewer critical problems of importance in Jeremiah than

in Isaiah, leaving one more free to concentrate upon the message of the book. It is taken for granted that for many students of Senior age this course will be their first systematic study of a book of the Bible, therefore it is best to avoid critical problems as much as possible. It is also obvious that a beginning student would be lost in the mooted interpretations of such of the prophets as Daniel or Ezekiel. To such a student the Bible must first make sense, then later he may wish to delve into its more complicated aspects.

There is no plan for teaching the book of Jeremiah to high school students which has come to the attention of the writer. For that reason, with the above considerations in mind, this attempt to prepare such a plan seems justified.

B. Sources of Materials and Methods

The primary materials are found in the book itself as it is given to us in the various English translations. Secondary materials are abundant in the form of commentaries, histories of the contemporary scene, and archaeological works. Special credit for much valuable help should be given to Dr. Ralph William Key, under whose instruction the writer was privileged to study the book of Jeremiah.

The problems of lesson construction and teaching methods are in the fore of modern educational discussion, so that there is a good deal of material available from the pens of the best author-

ities on Christian education. It is regrettable that there are so few models to follow in the method of teaching a book of the Bible. It is hoped that this paper will contribute to that small number.

CHAPTER II

THE PRINCIPLES OF BUILDING THE COURSE

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THE PRINCIPLES OF BUILDING THE COURSE

A. Introduction

Dr. Betts outlines the fourfold foundation principles for the preparation of any lesson or course of lessons as follows:

- "1. What definite aims have I set as the goal of my teaching? What outcomes do I seek?
2. What material, or subject matter, will best accomplish these aims? What shall I stress and what shall I omit?
3. How can this material best be organized, or arranged, to adapt it to the child in his learning?
4. What shall be my plan or method of presentation of this material to achieve its purpose? What of my techniques of instruction?"

Following that outline, this chapter will set forth the principles of curriculum building upon which the present course is built. For the sake of convenience rather than logic a fifth item for discussion will be added to this chapter, namely a few paragraphs of suggestion as to how it is intended that this course should be used.

B. Determining the Objectives

The International Council of Religious Education has outlined eight general objectives for Christian education. These are

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1. George Herbert Betts: How to Teach Religion, p. 42. For a good discussion of these principles see also George Herbert Betts and Marion O. Hawthorne: Method in Teaching Religion, chapter 3.

good to point the general direction, but we must also consider the principles by which specific objectives for the individual lesson are to be set up.¹

1. The Needs of the Student.

No doubt the needs of students will differ for individuals, groups, and geographic areas, but certain needs are more or less typical of Seniors throughout the high schools of America. These needs manifest themselves in the problems with which they struggle. There are problems of the personality, problems of a social nature, the beginnings of intellectual problems, and spiritual problems. An effort is herein made to meet and to suggest solutions to such problems insofar as the materials under consideration can be of service. These are practical objectives because the problems of youth are practical. ". . . they do not want merely to have information about religious matters but to know what the information is good for in their own experience."²

The carry-over of religious ideas to their practical implications is not always easy even for adults, so an attempt has been made to work out the objectives in such a way as to point out their worth for the student's life. The religious needs and interests of the Senior are so nearly alike that if at the moment he is not

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1. Paul H. Vieth: Objectives of Christian Education, presents the official comprehensive discussion of the seven objectives of Christian education as outlined by the I. C. R. E.
2. Moore, op. cit., p. 6.

vitally interested the proper presentation will quickly stir up such an interest. In the following discussion of the interests of Seniors as a guide to the making of objectives there are mentioned several of the needs which these lessons try to help fill.

2. The Interests of the Student.

It is well to plan the objectives in keeping with the real interests of youth. As has been said, these interests coincide rather closely with their needs. In the preparation of this course outline it was necessary to depend upon such indications of Senior interest as come to us from the International Council Curriculum Guide, the texts on adolescent behavior, and previous private observation. In this way it is hoped that the important general areas have been touched upon. Here, however, lies a responsibility upon the teacher to observe carefully what are the specific interests of his own group. In terms of these local interests it will sometimes be necessary to modify the prescribed objectives in order that the best results may be obtained.

The I. C. R. E. Curriculum Guide lists the following general areas of problems and interests for the adolescents of Senior age. Religious beliefs, worship, Bible, nature, relation of God and scientific truth, church, the kingdom of God, abundant living, conflicts in religious living, training for leadership, inter-church co-operation, and the problems of the practice of religion. Specifically under the latter are conduct, fear, others, personality integration, conscience, personal habits, self-control, Sunday, law,

ideals that conflict with popular practice, walking with God in every day situations, and how God works through others.¹ Most of these specific interests have been met in the objectives of the lesson plans.

Jeremiah gives opportunity to treat specifically such problems as, "Why does God let wicked people or nations prosper? Should one rather tell the truth or try to be popular? What kind of worship does God want? How does a man of God act in a crisis? What is the responsibility of a leader toward God? These and similar questions have been incorporated into the lesson plans.

The interests of high school students of Senior age already begin to turn to questions of the relationship of God and religion to politics, social justice, and economics. Although the real search for a philosophy of history belongs more typically to the college years, the preliminary questionings have already begun. Jeremiah offers many helpful answers to such questions. He has stirring messages on the relationship of religion and morals to national welfare and international status; he has a definite social message for those who claim to be servants of God; and he most clearly outlines a theistic philosophy of history.

3. Theological and Philosophical Considerations.

A further consideration in the formulation of objectives

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1. International Curriculum Guide, Book III: Christian Religion in Growing Life. Christian Education of Youth, pp. 99-101. This section deals with the education of Seniors, and contains a valuable detailed list of their interests and questions.

is the understanding of the important theological and philosophical contributions of the material. The time is past when the majority of prominent Christian educators objected to teaching the fundamentals of theology on the grounds that it was unnecessary or uninteresting. It is dangerous to force stuffy doctrines and involved theories into a curriculum, but at the same time there is a basic truth in the field of the Christian religion which is as important to the understanding and practice of Christianity as the basic rules of arithmetic are to that field. Furthermore, by the use of proper teaching methods these basic truths can be imparted with a modicum of tediousness to the student. It is enough to say here that such basic truth should be considered in the preparation of aims.

4. Individuality in Ability and Apperception.

The science of the mind and of education has taught us that aims must be made with a view to the abilities of the student and to his apperceptive mass. The student of sixteen or seventeen years has arrived very nearly to the full maturation of his intelligence, as measured by psychological tests, but each individual differs in what to him is his highest intelligence; and it is also noticeable that classes, especially if they are small classes, vary in their intellectual power. More important is the background of material to which new material can be related, which is the apperceptive mass. One of the very important aspects to consider therein should be the experience and training in Christianity previous to the course; and

as the course proceeds, also the basis of apperception which has been built up within the student in the previous lessons of the course. It will therefore be possible to aim at certain things at the end of the course which would not be nearly so certain of attainment at the beginning.

5. Our Average Student Defined.

In order that this series of lessons be saved from an indecisive course by reason of the great latitude of possible previous experience on the part of students it will be taken for granted that the average student who will study the lessons is of Protestant parentage, has attended Sunday school, or church, or both with a fair degree of regularity at least until the twelfth year, and has at present some tie with the church. This may be a formal and close one such as church membership or regular attendance at the meetings of one of the organizations of the church, or a more distant and informal one such as close friendship with others who are in the church. For groups which do not fit this description it will obviously be necessary to revise the plans in some measure.

6. In Keeping With the Materials.

Whatever aims are projected, they must never do violence to the nature of the material. If the two do not meet each other in a manner consistent with intellectual honesty then either the materials or the objectives must be put aside. In the present case, for the sake of the benefits to be obtained by studying the book as

a literary unity, we shall have to forgo some of the possible objectives of Bible teaching. There are certain things that the book of Jeremiah clearly teaches, and others which can be arrived at only by devious means such as imposing artificial interpretations upon passages, or enlarging matters of doubtful importance to undue proportions. Such means we must eschew with the confidence that the writer of a literary masterpiece, such as the book is recognized to be, certainly had the intelligence to say the things which were important to him in such a way that they stand forth clearly; and with the further confidence that the Divine Intelligence which designed the Holy Scriptures "for teaching, for reproof, for correction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work"¹---that this Intelligence will have arranged the Scriptures with such a balance of truth as to commend them to our practical use without attempts at alteration. This has been largely lost sight of in modern Bible study with the result that some of the values of the Bible have been lost to many.

On the other hand, it is legitimate to let a thought which begins in the book lead us out into wider implications if we are careful to recognize that in so doing we have left the text from which we started.

7. Use All the Principles.

It is not possible to construct objectives on the basis of

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1. II Timothy 3:16. (American Revised Version.)

only one principle and still get results which will meet the needs of well balanced teaching. As a rule a number of these principles, or all of them, are used, and it is entirely possible that one may be guided by principles which are not mentioned here or of which he is not at the time conscious.

C. Choosing the Materials

The introductory chapter has in part discussed the choice of materials and the reasons for that choice. In the preparation of individual lesson plans, however, it is necessary to make still further selection.

1. All of the Text Should Be Used.

It is hardly possible to get the full force of the book without reading all of the text, therefore the readings are so arranged that the student will cover the entire book in the course of the eighteen lessons. These readings are the basis of contextual surveys for the sake of clarifying and pointing up the passages which are studied more in detail.

2. Detailed Study of Passages Treating Adolescent Problems.

The material for detailed consideration is reduced largely to such passages as most clearly deal with problems pertinent to middle adolescents, and those which have the greatest interest value to them. Among the latter will be the narrative portions and the parables. Even in these sections it will at times be necessary to

consider with any degree of intensiveness only selected portions which express the heart of the prophet's message or which most directly drive toward the achievement of the aim of the lesson.

3. Outside Helps.

Besides the materials in the book of Jeremiah there are helps which may be profitably introduced from the outside. There are of Scripture, notably in II Kings and II Chronicles, which throw light upon the history or interpretations in the book of Jeremiah. There are pertinent facts and interesting pictures among the findings of archaeology which add to the understanding of the times. There is, lastly, a great field of historical knowledge about the times and geography of the book which can greatly help the student to understand the book and add life to the records of the past. Such extra-Biblical materials are referred to in the plans themselves, and further resource material for the use of the class or by the teacher is given in Supplement B.

4. Materials Must Help to Achieve the Objectives.

The guiding principle in the selection of all materials is to use that which will teach with the greatest possible clarity and interest in order to achieve most easily and certainly the desired objectives.

D. The Organization of Materials

There are four general ways of organizing materials: hap-

hazard, logical, chronological, and psychological.

1. Psychological Values Should Not Be Ignored.

The psychological arrangement of materials means that they are arranged in keeping with the psychological needs of the student. That is, they should start where the student is and follow in a sequence dictated not by such formal considerations as logic or chronology, but by the readiness of the student, his previous training, his emotions, his memory, his interests, and his abilities. Such an emphasis places the aims of teaching on the student rather than upon the materials. In so doing it corrects a weakness which is found in a purely objective organization.

The danger in a good thing newly discovered is that it may be considered the only good thing. In this case both the objective and the subjective considerations must be kept in mind for what they can contribute toward proper balance.

Whether one uses a psychological arrangement or not, the values which such an arrangement seeks to achieve should not be ignored. Meeting the interests and needs of the student at the place where we find him gives life to the materials and help to the student.

2. Chronological Organization Without Losing Psychological Values.

The book of Jeremiah is largely enough narrative that a chronological arrangement immediately suggests itself as logical. Unfortunately the materials of the book mirror the chaos of the times in which they were produced and are not always found in a clearly

recognizable order. It is possible, however, with the use of careful judgement and a few references to critical scholarship to set them a chronological order which is sufficiently accurate to satisfy the need of orderliness for high school students. And since there is so much in the book, both in the nature of narrative, and related to historical events, it would be difficult to find any other organization whereby it could be taught equally well.

Fortunately, chronological organization need not ignore the psychological values inherent in the materials, so it is attempted in these lessons to gain the psychological values within the chronological arrangement. This is achieved by the proper selection and emphasis--all within the limits of the author's intentions.

3. Lesson Units in Chronological Arrangement.

Specifically, then, the book is arranged in lesson-sized units in chronological order. These, in turn, are grouped into five larger units which suggest the logical unity of the materials; and finally, they are divided into two main sections with a review lesson each, both for the sake of meeting such mid-term examination requirements as the school may have, and of summarizing and organizing the materials in the mind of the student.

E. The Methods of Presentation

In the field of education ours may be called an age of method. Every book on education devotes a large part or a major part

of its space to discussions of method, and therefore it is not necessary to mention more in this paper than the choices of method which have been made, and a few reasons for having made them.¹

1. The Lecture Method.

The lecture method, although much assailed, has undeniable values for the presentation of factual material. It is used in the first lesson to lay the historical background of the book. Any other method would consume much more time and, unless it were carefully guided could not hope to cover nearly so much material. In the average school there is no preparation for the first class session. Since the materials of the book are long, there is not much time to spend on outside helps on the part of the student. There are other lessons in which lecture may profitably be a part in order to lay a foundation upon which to build class participation. In general those materials which cannot be easily enough or fully enough acquired by the students should be given to them by the teacher in this way.

2. The Question-and-answer Method.

The question-and-answer method is defined by Betts as that "in which the teacher leads in a half-formal conversation, asking questions and receiving answers either to test the pupil's preparation or to develop the facts and meanings of the lesson."²

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1. For the best discussions of method see Betts and Hawthorne, op. cit., chapter 9. Also Cynthia Pearl Maus: Teaching the Youth of the Church, chapter 4.
2. Betts, op. cit., p. 201.

This method, although it may not be directly called for in the plans, is sometimes indirectly called for in places where the student needs to be led into an understanding of the lesson for himself. Although time may not always permit the use of this method it is highly preferred to giving the student an outright statement of "this means that". What is discovered by one's own mental processes is much more clearly understood and more easily retained than imparted knowledge. ¹

The form of the assignments, however, will for the greater part be found to consist of leading questions, which are intended to help the student get the important facts and ideas as he studies the assigned readings.

3. The Discussion Method.

The discussion method differs from the question-and-answer method primarily in its purpose. It is best used for solving problems on the basis of given information. The opportunity which it affords for self expression is especially good to arouse interest in both class participation and the subject. Whoever leads a discussion must be thoroughly informed as to the basic facts which apply to the subjects, and he must have a goal in mind as well as a general plan as to how to arrive at that goal. One must beware lest it degenerate into an exchange of mutual ignorance or a contest in fluent expression. Conclusions arrived at by open discussion are

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1. The best discussion of the question-and-answer method is to be found in the book by Herman Harrell Horne: Story-telling, Questioning and Studying.

more powerful than any others, because they represent the consensus of his associates, which to him is a major standard of conduct. Such conclusions also carry weight because he has contributed to them of his own thinking.¹

4. The Method of Participation.

The method of participation in teaching is suggested in the form of telling the story of the lesson, preparing reports and the like. It helps the student to do his work more thoroughly, it has the exhilarating sense of doing something in public, and it adds variety and interest to the class sessions. It is really a part of several other methods.

5. The Story Method.

The story method is inevitable because of the nature of the materials. It is not suggested, nor is it generally wise, to repeat to the class a full account of what they have already read in their assignment. The immediate result is boredom, followed by failure to study the text, and ending in the teacher doing all the work and getting the only benefits. Nevertheless, to tell significant sketches of the story with the introduction of illustrative or explanatory material is one of the best ways to make the text live in the imagination of the students.

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1. For a good treatment of the discussion method see Nevin C. Harner: Youth Work In the Church, chapter 7.

6. The Project Method.

The project method is in great favor in present-day education. It is useful in these plans also. There are research projects listed in some of the lesson plans as well as in Supplement A; there are suggestions for dramatization; and Supplement A also suggests some manual arts projects. Some writers classify these as distinct teaching methods, but for our purposes nothing is lost to consider them all simply student projects. The teacher may add any projects that will help either the course or the students. A project should be clearly defined to the student. Then the teacher should in some way direct the carrying out of the project in order to insure its being done to the best of the student's abilities. The project should be completed in order to have value. It should finally be evaluated by the teacher, or the class, or by both. Projects are of most help when they can be presented for the benefit of the class. They are not only intended to stimulate the interest of the students who are engaged in the project, but also to add to the information or appreciation of the class.

7. The Method of Visual Aids.

A picture is still worth ten thousand words, even though the saying has an old and familiar sound. The teacher should bring to the class as much visual material as possible. Unfortunately such materials are usually incorporated into larger works and not available separately to be included in this work. Encyclopedia, archaeological works, and histories which contain such pictures are

available in any college or large public library. See the list in Supplement B.

F. The Use of the Teaching Guide

Specific instructions are given with each lesson but this is only an outline. It is not designed to give all the answers to the book of Jeremiah, nor is it intended to give even all the information which will be needed for the teaching of the book to high school students. There is no substitute for firsthand knowledge. Just as one would not presume to teach the plays of Ibsen from a commentary or prearranged outline alone, just so one must acquaint himself with the text of Jeremiah in order that the teaching in the class session may be the overflow of a reservoir of understanding and familiarity with the materials.

Objectives have been set up for each lesson in this outline, but the teacher must evaluate his own students--their background, their needs, their abilities, and their interests--and modify or supplement the stated objectives in the light of such an understanding. It is hoped that it will not generally be necessary to make extensive changes in objectives, but that those herein proposed will meet the needs of the average student.

Not much can be changed in the organization of materials, but if the teacher has good reasons for disagreeing with the chronology herein suggested it may even be possible to make minor changes to suit his views. Otherwise, the beginning student needs to under-

stand first of all the content and message of Dante, or Homer, or Shakespeare, or Jeremiah before he begins to criticize them. If it is done with discretion it may at times be permissible to transfer part of a reading assignment or part of the lesson treatment to the lesson previous or after. Since there is so much material to be covered one will need to beware lest he falls behind because of too slow or too minute treatment.

In the matter of methods it is important to remember that the most important element of method lies in the personality of the teacher himself. No amount of perfection in the mechanics of method can make up for a displeasing personality. Jesus taught by example. The teacher who would instruct his pupils in the ways of God must live a Godly and attractive life.

CHAPTER III
THE LESSON PLANS

CHAPTER III

THE LESSON PLANS

Foreword to the Teacher

The following eighteen lesson plans are prepared as a guide for teaching the book of Jeremiah during the course of one semester. Naturally, the previous preparation of the students, their readiness for such a course and the amount of time per class session may vary with situations. For that reason the student's assignments have been made more difficult and inclusive than the average student would be able to complete in preparation for one-hour classes. The teacher will need to select from the list of ten questions given for each lesson those which will help the class to cover the material and to lay for them an adequate basis for the achievement of the objectives of that lesson in the amount of time they have for study. The teacher will do well to study all the questions and to try to bring into the treatment of the lesson the results of such study.

Since the book of Jeremiah offers so much material and hence so many possible approaches, the teacher may not only wish to omit questions but also to change their order of sequence to lead the student's thinking toward the selected objective. An attempt has been made to state the questions in an order which will lead up to a climax, but the teacher should evaluate both the questions and their order in terms of his class.

In most of the assignments the first item includes the

giving of titles to the paragraphs and chapters. This is the most important of the ten, because it forces the student to read the material and to make at least an elementary organization of it. It is also helpful for review. If it is not desirable to ask the students to write out these titles for each lesson, they should at least be prepared to give them in class. A method which is quick and often helpful is to block out, with colored pencil, a word or phrase in each paragraph which is characteristic of its contents. This may serve much the same purpose as the giving of titles, although it is not as thorough. It has the added advantage that the student keeps with him, in his Bible, at least an elementary analysis of the text which cannot be lost as easily as his notes.

The first lesson, by its nature, and by reason of it being the opening session of the semester, must be presented in the lecture method. Unless otherwise indicated, the other plans are designed for carefully directed discussions, based on the study of the text and such additional presentations as the teacher may find necessary to supplement the students' reading.

If it is the practice of the school to assign term papers or projects for such a course they may be selected from the list of special studies and projects listed in Supplement A. It may add interest to the class to have reports on these studies and projects given in class at appropriate times. If there are dramatics students in the class, they may add to the appreciation of the literature of the book by preparing for, and reading in, class some of the descrip-

tive passages.

It is impossible, in the scope of these plans, to discuss all the problems that arise from the text. The arrangement of chapters, for instance, is a subject for critical analysis. For our purposes we have tried to arrange the materials into a fairly reasonable, simple, teachable outline, on the assumption that the technical details are not of sufficient importance to affect materially the message of the book, and would add only confusion to the study of the beginner. Notice that some of the chapters might fit into other parts of the ministry of Jeremiah almost as well as the parts to which they have been assigned in this outline, and that in one case (chapters 30 to 33) they have been deliberately moved from what is obviously their right chronological setting in order to give what seems to be a proper conclusion to the study of Jeremiah's message. If the teacher is an informed student of critical problems and has what to him are compelling reasons to change this arrangement, let it only be said that if too many changes are made it will be necessary to abandon these lesson plans as not representative of the preferred arrangement of materials. Generally speaking, for the beginning student the value of a book is lost if it is complicated with many critical problems.

Concerning interpretations, it is best to read one or several good commentaries, as given in Supplement B. Only those interpretations are herein mentioned which seem to contribute directly toward the achievement of the stated objectives.

The American Revised Version of the Bible is recommended

for this study because of its convenient division of the text into paragraphs. Other versions are helpful as supplementary reading. Some of the more recent ones are couched in modern speech, but often have rearranged the materials and make them difficult to find.

Lesson I

The World In Which Jeremiah Lived

The objective of this first lesson is to help the students to get the "feel" of Jeremiah's times.

The chart which follows shows the chronological relationship of the most important events in world and national history which contributed to the formation of the book of Jeremiah. It is hoped that it will be helpful to the teacher in presenting the character of Jeremiah's times to the class.

The chart, however, is intended primarily for the convenience of the pupils. They will profit by having this, or some other chart like it, before them during the course, in order to relate the material of the text to its historical context. The teacher should familiarize himself with the history of the last years of the Assyrian empire, the rise of the Neo-Babylonian empire, and the parallel events in the history of Egypt, in order to bring the class to an appreciation of the true significance of the events listed in this chart. This cannot be too strongly emphasized, since Jeremiah and his message take on their full meaning only in the light of their times; and only by knowing what he meant to his times can he really speak to ours. Several good historical and archaeological texts are suggested in Supplement B. A second reason for familiarity with the history, as well as the geography, of the times lies in the great interest value for the class—they give life to the book.

In the course of the following lesson plans there will be

only occasional references to history and geography. It is expected, however, that the teacher will lay the basis for each lesson firmly in its historical setting.

The classroom should be equipped with a good, large map of the ancient world on which historical events can be placed in their geographic setting. The developments of the last years have put the Near East very much into the consciousness of people, therefore geography will be a point of interest for the class. To keep these geographic areas alive in the minds of the students, bring to class, and ask them to bring to class, clippings from newspapers, magazines, and other current literature which deal with places that are being studied. They may be read in class or posted on the bulletin board.

To help orientate the class in the sociology of the times it will be helpful to bring with you to class as many pictures about these times as you can.

A Chronology of Jeremiah and His Times ¹

JUDAH AND JEREMIAH	ASSYRIA	EGYPT
<p><u>JOSIAH</u>, 638 (II K. 22,23; II Chron. 34, 35.)</p> <p>Jeremiah's call in 13th year. (Chapt. 1)</p> <p>Scythian invasions of Western Asia. (Chapt. 2-6. ?)</p> <p>Finding the Book of the Law in the temple in 18th year. 621. (Chapt. 11, 12 about here. ?)</p> <p>Battle of Megiddo, 608. Josiah killed.</p> <p><u>JEHOAHAZ</u>, 608. (Shallum) (II K. 23:30-33; II Chron. 36:1-4; Jer. 22:10-12.)</p> <p>Succeeds to the throne, but deposed by Necho and taken to Egypt.</p> <p><u>JEHOIAKIM</u>, 608 (II K. 23:34 to 24:7; II Chron. 36:4-8; Jer. 22:13-19; 36:30,31.)</p> <p>Appointed by Necho.</p> <p>(Chapt. 7-10, 14-20, 26.)</p>	<p>Decaying power. Names of kings uncertain.</p> <p>Fall of Nineveh, 612-8. End of Assyrian empire.</p>	<p>Psammetichus I.</p> <p>Necho, 621</p>
<p>"Fourth Year Utterances." (Chapt. 25, 35, 36, 45-51.)</p> <p>Nebuchadrezzar invades Judah. Jehoiachin resists but dies before he arrives.</p> <p><u>JEHOIACHIN</u>, 597 (Coniah) (II K. 24:8-17; II Chron. 36:9-11; Jer. 22:20-30.)</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><u>BABYLON</u></p> <p>Battle of Carchemish, 605-4. Necho beaten.</p> <p>Nebuchadrezzar, 604.</p>	

1. Arranged from Bennett, W. H.: The Book of Jeremiah, p. 121. In The Expositor's Bible, volume 4, 1943 edition.

JUDAH AND JEREMIAH	BABYLON	EGYPT
Continues the revolt but surrenders when Nebuchadrezzar arrives. Taken to Babylon with mother and many temple vessels. (Chapt. 13. ?)		
<u>ZEDEKIAH</u> , 596 (II K. 24:18 to 25:30; II Chron. 36:11-23.) Appointed by Nebuchadrezzar. (Chapt. 21:11-15. ?)		Psammetichus II, 596
Jeremiah tries to keep him loyal and argues against priests who support alliance with Egypt. Hananiah dies. Controversy with prophets at Babylon. (Chapt. 24, 27-29.)		Hophra, 591
Judah revolts with encouragement of Hophra. Nebuchadrezzar besieges Jerusalem. Slaves released. Hophra advances; siege temporarily lifted and slaves taken back. Jeremiah tries to leave city and is arrested. Siege resumed after Hophra retreats into Egypt. (Chapters 21:1-10; 34, 37, 38.)		
During siege Jeremiah buys land and buries the deed as sign of sure return of Judah. Consolation chapters. (Chapt. 30-33.)		
<u>JERUSALEM DESTROYED</u> , 586 Zedekiah tries to flee but is caught, taken to Babel, his sons killed, he is blinded and taken to Babylon. Jeremiah kept in prison a month till Nebuzaradan arrives, when he is freed. Most of the population taken away. Gedaliah made governor. (Chapt. 39, 50.)		
Gedaliah murdered and remnant goes to Egypt, taking Jeremiah and Baruch along. (Chapt. 40-44.)		Amasis, 570
	Nebuchadrezzar invades Egypt, 568 (?)	
Jehoiachin released from prison.	Evil-Merodach, 561	

Lesson II

Are Prophets Born or Made?

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapter 1. Give a title of not more than three words to each paragraph.
2. What is to be the work of this prophet? (Verse 7.)
3. What was the extent of the work to which he was called?
4. What two visions did Jeremiah see? What is their meaning?
5. Who was Jeremiah? Where was he from? In what sense might he have been born a prophet?
6. When did he begin to prophesy? During the reign of what kings did he prophesy? How old was he when he began?
7. What did God tell Jeremiah He would make him? Against whom?
8. In what is Jeremiah to rest his confidence? (See especially verses 8 and 19.)
9. What great general movement was on at this time? In what sense might he have been made a prophet? (Read II Chronicles 34.)
10. Are prophets born or made? What constitutes a call? Compare Matthew 28:18-20 with the call of Jeremiah.

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objective of this lesson is to show how God calls His spokesmen.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. "Call of Jeremiah" is a simple title for this chapter.

"A child" will probably recall paragraph two to the minds of most students. These titles should be their own, for obvious reasons, but the class will be helped by thinking through the material together and making a chart in class with the titles they like best as a group.

2. Make clear to the class that the work of a prophet is not primarily to predict the future, but to speak for God. If God wishes to predict to the people then He does it through the prophet, but it is only a part of the prophet's larger responsibility to communicate the mind of God to the people. The Greek $\pi\rho\phi\eta\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ (prophay-tays) means simply to "speak for". The purpose of prediction, as will be seen from the events of the book, is not primarily to prove the all-knowingness of God nor the inspiration of the prophet, but to prove to the people that it is God who is doing the things that are coming to pass. If the contemporary observer or the historian say that a given event is the hand of God, someone may say that such is only the private interpretation of the historian or observer; but if a man like Jeremiah says a long time before the event that God will bring such and such a thing to pass unless the people change their attitude toward Him, then upon the occurrence of the event he can say with great force of evidence that "These events are the working of God, hear ye what He is saying through them." Of course, as Jeremiah says to Hananiah in 28:19, the inspiration of a prophet is eventually proved by the fulfillment of his predictions.

3. Notice that he was not only called to speak to Judah but to the international situation.

4. In its simplest form the message is that God will stand by His word, and that destruction is coming from the north. Notice how these two themes of "trust God", and "beware the north" run through the entire book.

5. These facts will play a part in some of the events that follow in the book. At this point in the course they suggest to us that since Jeremiah was a priest from the priestly city of Anathoth he was born into the prophetic ministry in the sense that he was born into a family and community in which religious matters were constantly in the forefront of discussion. But what became of all the other young men who were born to similar circumstances? Another matter to take into consideration is that he was born with the capacities for the prophetic office.

6. He began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, and continued to do so during the reigns of the five kings mentioned. He was probably about twenty years of age when he began. He had not yet become fully an adult, but it is not necessary to assume that he was a child in our sense of the word, because the same term is used by Solomon of himself in I Kings 3:7. At that time Solomon was a young man, not a child. The point of interest to the class is that Jeremiah was called when he was a young man. Prophets are usually called in their youth, for it is the age of idealism and daring.

7. The message of Jeremiah was bound to be unpopular, and without the strength of God on his side he would not be able to

remain firm, but God says that He himself will fortify this young man who is so conscious of his own weakness? Can God help anyone who does not want to be helped? Compare with the story of the publican and the Pharisee in the temple told by Jesus.

8. These promises pertain only to one who is sent of God. Do we sometimes expect God's protection when we are not doing what God wishes us to do?

9. Josiah's reforms had begun the year before. It was likely this movement which stimulated Jeremiah's mind sufficiently to permit God to speak to him at this time. In this sense the prophet was made by his times, as all prophets are partly the result of their times. God uses the events of our lives to bring about His purposes in us. As we shall see later, He even uses the plans of wicked men to accomplish His good purposes. This book teaches, among other things, that men are to regard with care the voice of God which speaks in the events of their lives.

10. The answer is that prophets are both born and made. People are born with or without the capacities for all kinds of work, including prophecy, but they never attain to that work unless, like Jeremiah, they decide to take it up. Furthermore, he who is born to certain possibilities never attains to them unless God helps him to be his best.

Both are illustrated in the life of the prophet. The fact that God says He knew him from the womb need not confuse us, for it is entirely possible for God to predestine a man's abilities from

birth (and does He not?) and yet put the choice of acceptance or rejection of this prenatal calling upon him. Let the class think if they know of people who had talents which they never used, and therefore went through life less than God evidently intended them to be. The passage in Matthew may emphasize the fact that only those who are not Christians do not have upon them already one call to the work. It is not only isolated individuals like Jeremiah who are called by God, but His commission is upon all who are His followers.

The most important elements in a call are a need, the ability to do something about it, and a compulsion for religious reasons to do something about it. Let the class think what their own abilities and the situations under which they live may indicate that God's commission is for them. Let them be alert through the course of the study of this book for those things in the experience and message of Jeremiah which may help them to be what God intends them to be.

Lesson III

What Politics Have To Do With Religion

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 2 through 6. Give titles of not more than three words to each paragraph and chapter.
2. Note the names of cities and nations which are mentioned. What has Judah had to do with each of them?
3. List the sins of which the people are accused. What special classes of people are specifically named? What are the charges against each class?
4. What is Jeremiah's personal attitude toward his people? Is he angry with them?
5. The symbolism of the harlot is based on what relationship between God and Judah? How has God tried to keep up this relationship? (Chapters 2 and 3.)
6. How did Judah react to Israel's sufferings? (Chapter 3.)
7. What is foretold will happen to Judah? (Chapters 4, 5, and 6.)
On what conditions does the restoration of Judah depend? (Chapters 3 and 4.)
8. What do these chapters say about God's attitude toward religious services? (Especially chapter 6.)
9. What is the difference between 5:7, 8 and 4:30, 31? What, according to Jeremiah, have a nations moral and religious conduct to do with her military and political position? Why?
10. Try to think of modern examples of what Jeremiah is talking about. For instance: Have we any people today who are like the

priests and princes who are mentioned? Are there any nations today that might in some way compare with those mentioned in these chapters? How do the prophet's moral standards and social standards apply to our times?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objectives of this lesson are: a. To familiarize the student with the general nature of Jeremiah's message and the reasons for his preaching it. b. To help the students recognize the validity for us as well as for his times of Jeremiah's precept that a nation's moral and religious conduct determines her ultimate fate.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. These five chapters are commonly considered to be a summary of Jeremiah's early preaching. It is important that the class get an over-all view of the material. This may be obtained by listing the headlines which would appear in a daily paper of the prophet's day if he had preached a sermon such as these chapters. The student might also write a 100-word news article which might have been printed about such a sermon.

2. The history of Judah's connections with the nations mentioned and implied should have been discussed in the first lesson, but it will be necessary to repeat the facts pertinent to each lesson so that they will be clearly kept in mind.

3. It sharpens the contemporary scene in the mind of the student to have clearly in mind the specific accusations which are brought against given classes of people, as well as to know the gen-

eral accusations against the nation as a whole.

4. Jeremiah was to the people of Jerusalem what ministers in general are to many high school students—a sort of natural enemy lying in wait to pounce upon their conscience. 4:19-21 and other verses show the real attitude of Jeremiah toward his people. If his true character is called to the attention of the pupils it may help them to look more deeply into the motives of others who in modern times represent God and morality.

5. The history of God's covenant with the tribes of Israel may be briefly sketched at this point. A member of the class may be asked to read the words "In God We Trust" from a coin. Then ask the group to recall some ways in which the United States is like Israel. No doubt some of the pupils' ancestors came to this country in search of religious freedom, and felt they were being led by God to a promised land.

6. The old problem: "Do we learn anything from history except that people do not learn anything from history?" Are there things in the events centering around World War II from which we should learn lessons?

7. The answers to this question are clearly given in the assigned text. Jeremiah sees a definite relationship between a nation's moral and religious life and the political, economic, and military conditions. If the people of Germany would have repented and turned to God, would they have been spared destruction? How late might repentance still have been effective? What about Holland

or Poland?

8. The hypocrite is one of the high school student's chief religious problems. Perhaps Jeremiah can help him out.

9. The question is delicate, but also the one which may arouse the greatest interest on the part of the students. High school juniors and seniors have arrived at an age when they must deal honestly with sex, and they are very much in search of clear and satisfactory standards for moral conduct. Jeremiah here gives one answer to their "Why" about morals. Let the class decide what his answer is and what his reasons are for giving it. There will perhaps be a temptation for them to spend too much time on this one question. (Notice that the passages referred to use illicit sexual relationships once as a figure of speech and once in a literal sense.)

10. Unless it is particularly convenient to do so, this question is not intended to be treated by itself, but rather, as we have indicated above, in the course of the discussion of the other questions.

Lesson IV

The Conspiracies

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 11 and 12. Give titles of not more than three words to each paragraph and chapter.
2. What are the two conspiracies? Against whom? Why are they plotted? What is the predicted outcome of each? Why?
3. What is the covenant to which Jeremiah refers?
4. What is Jeremiah's reaction to the covenant?
5. How do the people react to the covenant? Why do you think they react thus?
6. Explain 11:14. Compare it with 7:16-20. Why does God take this attitude?
7. Trace the breakdown of the prophet's emotions. Where does he reach the depth of despondency? Trace the restoration of his faith. (Chapter 11:18 through chapter 12.)
8. What is his reaction to all this trouble? (Chapter 12.) State in your own words God's answer in 12:5, 6.
9. What does God say that He has suffered in comparison with Jeremiah? (Chapter 12:7-13.) Where does Jeremiah finally come out?
10. Explain why a man like Jeremiah could say both the things he says in 4:19-21 and in 12:3.

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objectives of this lesson are to show that: a. When people reject God they also reject His commandments and His servants.
b. The greatest of men pass through inner struggles.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. The view of the whole is easily achieved in an assignment of two chapters. Not much class time need be taken for this.

2. The two plots are against God, and against Jeremiah. God's covenant is rejected because it requires a change in the lives of the people; and Jeremiah is threatened because he persists in preaching the covenant. The two invariably go together. The history of Josiah's reforms indicates that whereas the king and some of the priesthood and nobility readily accepted them, and although the old idols were broken down, yet the people never fully entered into the reform. Have we modern examples of reforms or changes forced upon people against their will? Can democracy, for instance, be forced on the people of Japan? What would be a better way? How would one go about it?

3. The book of the law had been discovered in the temple. Just what it included no one knows. It likely included at least large sections of Deuteronomy, and perhaps most of the Pentateuch. According to the account in II Chronicles 34, and II Kings 22 and 23, all the people had joined the king in the renewal of this covenant.

4. Jeremiah heartily accepted the covenant, and hoped the people would too, but they did so only in form. The prophet realized

that more was needed, and seems to have been deeply concerned about their superficiality.

5. The people joined Josiah in his renewal of the covenant but soon deserted it. When the true meaning of the law was made clear to them by the prophets, of whom Jeremiah was one, they rebelled most strenuously. Do people like to change their ways of living and acting today? Is it hard to make people who have lived immoral and anti-social lives accept morality and social justice? What would the people in our community say if someone came and told them that they were living wickedly and that they must change? Who would be right?

6. In the light of 7:16-20 the command in 11:14 is understandable. God does not indicate that it is against His will to pray for these people, but rather that it isn't any use. If it were against His will, then He would not send Jeremiah to preach to them; but even though people will not listen, God still sends them prophets, in order that a few may be saved. Compare this with Jesus' parable of the sower in Luke 8, the call of Isaiah (Isaiah 6:9-13), and II Peter 3:9. The people had been trained from childhood, and for generations in paganism, and God knew that the greater part of them would need stronger persuasion than preaching, but one should not be able to say afterwards that He hadn't given them a chance before He used stronger medicine. Are there things of which our nation is guilty which may need stronger persuasion than preaching to rid us of? Race problems? Labor-capital disputes? Or can we still change our ways?

7, 8, and 9. Things get too much for Jeremiah and he breaks down, ready to throw the whole thing overboard. For a moment he wishes God would destroy all his wicked enemies. God says, "If you can't take this how are you going to take what is coming? Jeremiah, 'you aint seen nothin yet'." Strange comfort for a man in trouble, isn't it? Then God reminds him that He too has been plotted against, and that His people, whom He has loved, have become a roaring lion against Him. Jeremiah sees the point and God renews in him His message to the people.

10. Great men are human. Jeremiah, like no other prophet, lets us into the secrets of his mind and shows us that those who we think are the strongest and the boldest also have their struggles. They are not always as perfect in their thoughts as thy might wish to be or as we may imagine them to be. Notice, however, that although he calls on God to destroy the plotters against him, he does not stay in that frame of mind, but is soon among the people and preaching again. The greatest minds are subject to temptations. Compare the experiences of David or the doubts of John the Baptist with this. The sign of greatness is that they can overcome these temptations, or, if they cannot, they repent of them and return to the right way. There is one difference between the denials of Peter and Judas. The people of Judah in Jeremiah's time were not tempted to do wrong, it was their characteristic expression.

Lesson V

What Kind of Worship Does God Want?

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 7 through 10 and chapter 26. Give titles of not more than three words to each paragraph and chapter.
2. What does God say He commanded the people? (Chapter 7.)
3. Does Jeremiah believe that the people will listen to him? What is his attitude toward the things he predicts? Toward the people? About himself? (Chapters 7, 8, and 26.)
4. How do the people act toward each other? List the things that are to happen as a result. (Especially chapter 9.)
5. How do the scribes, prophets, and priests react to this message? Why? What reply does Jeremiah make to them?
6. What accusations and predictions are made against the scribes, priests, and the royal household? (Chapter 8.)
7. Explain why Jeremiah and Uriah were treated differently.
8. What ideas did the people have about the temple and sacrifices? What was wrong about them? What was Jeremiah's warning? What ideas do people today have about the church and religious services?
9. What superstitions did Jeremiah have to combat? Is what he says about God scientifically correct?
10. In what does God delight? (Chapter 9.)

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objective of this lesson is to show that: God's house

and religious formalities do not take the place of a right inner relationship toward God and righteous conduct toward men.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. Organize a view of the whole lesson in the mind of the student by having someone tell the story in brief, by making headlines for a newspaper account of the event, or by an impromptu dramatization.

2. A superficial reading might give the impression that God does not want religious services. Is this true, or does He know that if the inward man is right his services will also be right? Can one please God with religious services when one persists in disobeying His commandments?

3. The heroic task of a moral and religious reformer may be compared with examples with which the class is familiar. Note his loneliness, the apparent futility of the task, his intense love for those to whom he preaches.

4. In the case of Judah their internal strife was the result of disobedience to God's social and moral laws. Jeremiah predicts national ruin as a result? Do the laws which God gave to the nation of Judah also apply to our nation, or do we operate by different laws of God?

5. Scholarship and the clergy are not right unless they are in agreement with the truth. Jeremiah says that truth and right are found in the words of God. Is it possible that today those who are looked upon for leadership could be wrong? If they are, where

shall we find the truth? Is there a higher authority than that of our leaders?

6. Those who are in high places are largely responsible for the behavior of their people. How do the scholars (scribes), clergy, and political leaders influence the people of modern times?

7. For one thing, Jeremiah had friends among the nobility. As a priest from Anathoth he may even have been related to some of them. For another thing, God sometimes lets misfortune befall His truest servants for reasons of His own. Compare with the experiences of James and Peter in Acts 12:1-19. Historically the account of Uriah is of interest because it shows that the leadership and the people were divided among themselves on the great issues of the day.

8. The people thought that as long as the temple was with them they were safe from attack, because God would not forsake either His house or His people. If He did He would no longer have a house or a people, and would therefore cease to be a God to anybody. They seem to have misinterpreted the book which was found in the temple to say that God demanded only formalistic religious observances from them, and that otherwise they could do as they pleased. The class may be asked if some people today think that church membership, attending services, or "acting good" on Sundays is what God expects of them. What does Jeremiah say that God expects of His people?

9. Superstitions about inanimate things often have a surprising influence on adolescents. It might be shown how much these superstitions are like the ideas ancient people had about idols and

charms.

Jeremiah is trying to show that God is a living God in comparison to all these other powerless things, and that our respect and confidence should be directed toward Him. He does not say how God accomplished creation, he merely says, in beautiful poetry, that He did so. In this there is nothing with which science has a quarrel, because science deals only with creation as it is, and not how it came to be.

10. 9:23 summarizes the essential message of these five chapters.

Lesson VI

The Rule By Which God Deals With A Nation

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 14 through 20. Divide the assignment into two or three sections and give a title to each section. Give a title of not more than three words to each chapter.
2. Decide who is speaking in each of the paragraphs of chapters 14 through 17.
3. What are Jeremiah's feelings about himself? About his people? About God? Is he justified in taking these attitudes?
4. What three things is Jeremiah not to do? What is the people's reaction when he tells them? (Chapter 16.)
5. What is the predicted evil that is to befall Judah? Is there a reason for it? Is it a good reason?
6. What does Passhur ben Immer do to Jeremiah? Why? What name does Jeremiah give him? What does it mean? (Chapter 20.)
7. What is to happen to Judah if it keeps the Sabbath? What if it does not? Why is this commandment given such importance? Do these things apply to us? Give reasons for your answer. (Chapter 17.)
8. What country is specifically named as the captor of Judah?
9. Prepare to tell the story of the potter's house. What does God say He will do to the nation that repents? What to the nation that does not repent? What is Judah's attitude? (Chapter 18:12.)
10. Prepare to tell the story of the broken bottle. (Chapter 19.)

What similarities and what differences are there between these two parables? Why are they together here?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objectives of this lesson are to show that: a. Jeremiah is heroic enough to preach the unpleasant truth even to the people he loves. b. The basis of God's dealing with a nation is not arbitrary, but according to their dealings with Him.

Chapters 18 and 19 are the most important part of this lesson. Let several of the pupils tell the story and message of these two chapters to the class, and let the class comment on how well they caught the essentials.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. The divisions in the American Revised Version are good. It might also be divided into a section in which Jeremiah wrestles with God (14 to 17:18), and a section in which he wrestles with the people. Many divisions are possible. The class may enjoy the mental exercise of arranging the material; and if they do, they will become familiar with the contents. The two-part division suggested above lends itself to showing how such an inward struggle often precedes a great social or religious message. Note his reluctance and doubts, yet, "If I say I will not make mention of him...then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire. ." 20:9.

2. This is to help clarify the student's mind in seeing Jeremiah's struggle. Notice that God holds him to His message, and

how the prophet periodically breaks down within himself under the strain, yet God continues to lift him up and makes him a "brazen wall". Is this sometimes the experience of our pupils in their struggle to maintain that which is right against their own inner weaknesses, and against circumstantial difficulties?

3. Once again this may be an analogy of the struggle of God in an adolescent. A young person who tries to stand for the right amid evil influences and misleading contemporaries will find that he is not always personally equal to the task, and may pity himself; that he must keep his love for his contemporaries even while he resists their wrong; and that he can accomplish it if he will let God fortify him. Although it would seem that the prophet's wrath against the people is uncalled for, let us remember that at least here he is only repeating what God has said, and therefore only acquiescing to His judgment. The other parts of these chapters show how hard it is for him to do so.

4. These commands of God are given for a specific difficult situation, not for general observance. They had the desired effect upon the people of making them constantly conscious of Jeremiah's message by his daily conduct. Notice how much their anticipated reply is like that in Matthew 25:44.

5. A list of the predictions is more helpful than a general statement. The reasons are also given. Perhaps they are summed up in 17:3.

6. Jeremiah has repeatedly repudiated the idea that God will

protect His people and His temple just because they are His. Jeremiah insists that they are no longer His even in outward form. To many of the priests and people that is blasphemy against God. How could a god destroy his own temple? How do we feel about the recent destruction of churches in Europe?

7. Many of the other commandments have been mentioned in the previous chapters. The reason for the special emphasis upon this one is probably because of the close connection of the Sabbath with religious observances. If the Sabbath were really kept holy unto the Lord, some of the other things would also disappear. Is the way in which one keeps the Lord's day a barometer of his true religious interests? Of his religious depth?

8. At last Babylon emerges by name as the nation which is to capture Judah. This would indicate that the battle of Charchemish had already been fought in the north. Notice, however, that although Egypt has for a time showed great power, Jeremiah has never been afraid of her except as an ally.

9. God's dealing is according to man's dealing, and as a nation changes so God changes in his dealings with that nation.

10. As long as the clay was soft in the potter's hands it could be changed. There comes a time when it is hardened into a set form, and the only thing to do with an unuseful pot is to break it. God, in chapter 18, gives Judah a chance to be re-molded. They refuse, and therefore He says He will have to break them. It is really a drama of what has happened in that nation in the past decades, and

of what is to result in the near future.

Lesson VII

What About God And Aggressor Nations?

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 25 and 46 through 51. What nations are mentioned in these prophecies?
2. Locate on a map as many of the nations as you can.
3. When were these prophecies given? What happened at that time?
(See especially chapter 46 for a reference to world history.)
Which of these events had already come to pass at the time they were prophesied?
4. Which of these nations are to be completely destroyed and which are to be restored and which are to be restored later?
5. Which nation is to do the destroying? What does God call Nebuchadrezzar?
6. Where is the destruction to begin? (Chapter 25.) Why should it begin here? What is there about this prophecy that the nations of that age could not understand?
7. What are the reasons which the Babylonians give for having plundered Judah? (Chapter 50.) What will God finally do with His "battle axe"? Is there justice in His treatment of Babylon?
8. Over what part of the earth is Jehovah God? Is Jehovah defeated when the armies of Judah and Israel are defeated? Why not?
9. Is Jeremiah right, does God really control history? Was Germany His "battle axe"? Were the Allies?
10. Is God a God of love? Is He a God like Jeremiah describes in

these chapters? Can He be both?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objective of this lesson is to show that: God controls history.

This lesson might lend itself to a period of discussion on either of the last two questions. If that plan is followed, it will be necessary to move quickly through the subject matter of the text at the beginning of the lesson, in order to get at least a background for the discussion.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. and 2. These two items can be made into an interesting study in historical geography on the power of Babylon in Western Asia. A large map of ancient Bible lands may be displayed before the class, and the pupils asked to locate the nations mentioned; or a map may be drawn on the blackboard and shaded in to represent the conquered areas.

3. The fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign was the year of the Battle of Carchemish, which is the subject of 46:2-12. This section and 49:28-33 give us what the writer says are past events. That does not make them any the less prophecy. Remember our previous definition. Jeremiah saw what was going to be the outcome of the growing power of Babylon, and warned the nations not to trust to their military might, because for the present she was an irresistible power. Even Egypt was to be overrun. God had said it would be so.

4. Indication is given as to whether or not each of the

nations is to be revived after the Babylonian captivity. Historically these prophecies are so accurate that some critics think they were written after the events. To accept that we should have to deny the clear statements of the text, which is not necessary if we believe in a God who foresees history.

5. Instead of deploring the victory of Bel and Marduk, the Babylonian gods, over Judah and her Jehovah, Jeremiah says that Jehovah is universal and that it is therefore He who uses Nebuchadnezzar as His servant and Babylon as his battle axe to execute judgment upon the earth. That does not mean that He has raised up this wicked power to be an instrument of cruelty, but since this power exists, and since it is going to wreck nations, rather than to defeat God, He will turn their evil unto the accomplishment of His will.

6. It was a completely new idea to the ancients that a god should turn against his own people. To them a god and the welfare of his people were synonymous concepts. When a nation ceased to exist, the god of that nation also ceased to exist, because he no longer had worshipers. Note that Jehovah is independent of His people. He does not need their worship. He is willing to punish His people in order that they may draw near to Him.

A question for consideration: Does destruction always come first to a nation that should have known better, before it comes to an equally wicked nation that never has accepted God?

7. The claim of Babylon that they were only fulfilling God's wrath against the Israelites is not valid. God was angry, but could

manage His own quarrels without the interference of Babylon. Since Babylon did the act, however, God's intention with Judah was fulfilled rather than thwarted, but that did not vindicate the horrible acts for the Babylonians. A braggart may need a "taking down", but people who go about "taking down" braggarts have their own punishment coming. When Babylon's time comes God will say, "You did my work, but not because you intended to. You intended to grasp for yourself, and according to your selfishness shall it be done unto you."

8. What would be the result to our faith if the American armies were defeated by an aggressor nation? Are we now in the position of Judah, or Babylon, or both, or neither? What makes us think so?

9. The question, "Does God control history?" might be the subject for a more formal debate between several members of the class, who would prepare for it beforehand. If such a debate is held it would be profitable to follow it with an open discussion in which the ideas that have been awakened in the minds of the listeners may be expressed and evaluated.

10. This question is not well suited for a formal debate, because the answer lies in a combination of both the negative and the affirmative. At this point in Jeremiah's prophecies he strongly emphasizes the terrible justice of God. He does it because the people refused to think of Him except as a God of love, who would not bring evil upon them even when they did wrong. Reading ahead to the last lessons, it will appear that when the terrible judgments

did come, and the people thought of God only in terms of wrath, then the prophet shows the other side of God—how He has done all this to bring them to Himself and happiness, and how He will eventually restore them. At most places one attribute of God's nature does not appear without also a mention of the other. Notice that even Jesus did not speak only of God's love, but that He told us much of what the New Testament has to say about God's judgment. The relationship of justice and love in the nature of God is one of the high school student's perplexing intellectual religious problems. In times of war or of personal tragedy this problem becomes very real. We can do him a great service by helping him work it out for himself.

Lesson VIII

The Burning of the Scroll

A. Student's Assignment ¹

Read chapters 35, 36, and 45.

Chapter 35.

1. To whose house was Jeremiah directed to go?
2. Where was he to bring them?
3. What was he to offer them?
4. Did he do this?
5. Did the Rechabites drink wine?
6. Why not?
7. How do they explain their presence in Jerusalem?
8. How does Jeremiah apply this object lesson in obedience?
9. What is emphasized in the contrast between "their father" and "me" in v. 16?
10. What was the message of Jeremiah from God to the Rechabites?

Chapter 36.

1. What was Jeremiah directed to write in the roll?
2. For what purpose?
3. Whom did Jeremiah direct to read the roll in public?
4. Why did he not do so himself?
5. What effect did the reading have upon the chief men who heard it?

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1. Wilbert W. White: Thirty studies in Jeremiah, pp. 91, 92, 96, 97.

6. What means did they adopt to have the king hear the message?
7. What effect did the reading have upon the king?
8. What did Jeremiah do after the burning of the first roll?
9. What prophecy did he utter concerning Jehoiakim?
10. Was this second roll larger than the first?

Chapter 45.

1. To whom is this message addressed?
2. Whose son was Baruch?
3. When did the message come to Baruch?
4. What was Baruch doing when the message came?
5. What did Baruch say which occasioned this message?
6. What was the message of the Lord respecting the land?
7. What was Baruch's ambition?
8. What was God's advice in respect to this?
9. What does God announce respecting the immediate future?
10. What does God promise Baruch as to his own personal safety?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

Chapters 35, 36, and 45 are commonly considered to be a part of the "Fourth Year Utterances" of Jeremiah; so called because they were spoken in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim. The present lesson permits of several modes of treatment. It may be desired to remain true to the character of the subject matter and thus divide the lesson between the case of the Rechabites and the story of the scroll, or one may treat them together with the recognition

that he uses some degree of license in so doing. As for method, one can use discussion, story telling, or dramatic presentation, or some combination of the three which suites the character of the class.

The two methods of treatment which suggest themselves with the greatest appeal are these: a. To begin the class period with a discussion of chapter 35, followed by a dramatic presentation of chapters 36 and 45, and concluded by a discussion of the faithfulness of the drama to the story and spirit of the text. b. To incorporate all three chapters into a dramatic presentation, treating chapter 35 as one of the sermons which was included in the scroll (as it most likely was), and concluding the class period with a discussion of the play in light of the text. The latter plan would seem to have most to commend it.

In either case the above thirty questions, taken from Dr. White's studies in Jeremiah, may be used to guide the pupils' study.

This lesson should be prepared well in advance so as to assure a careful presentation. It might be counted as the term project for those who participate.

The object of dramatic presentation like this is to stimulate careful observation and clear interpretation. Those who put on the play might study the chapters individually, then meet as a group to discuss their observations and interpretations. Then they can begin to lay out the plot, setting and dialogue. The less the teacher needs to help them the more the students will benefit from the project, but they should not be left to flounder if they have

real trouble. The rest of the class should be prepared to evaluate in light of the text. Dramatic flaws are important only in so far as they tend to distort the intentions of the text. Lest it be reduced to a matter of mere recitation, the cast should be encouraged to write the dialogue in paraphrase as much as possible.

A stage is not necessary. If the classroom is not too small various positions can be designated to represent the necessary points in the city where the action takes place. At each position one or several appropriate stage properties may be placed to help the imagination. For instance, the king's room may be represented by an arm chair somewhat raised from the floor by placing a sturdy box or some books underneath it, and by a cardboard replica of a brazier.

On the other hand, it need not be as informal as this. If the mechanics do not detract too much from the value of the study, the cast may wish to use a stage with carefully made properties and make-up. There is a danger in such a presentation that the play takes on more importance than the study.

Lesson IX

Review Lesson

A. Student's Assignment

1. Give your chapter title and a short sentence stating the contents of each chapter studied thus far.
2. Give a 100-word description of the character of Jeremiah.
3. According to Jeremiah:
 - a. What decides how a nation's fate will ultimately turn out?
 - b. Why do many people dislike God's prophets?
 - c. What kind of worship does God want?
 - d. According to what rule does God destroy or build up nations?
 - e. What power decides what will be the course of history?
 - f. Does God let trouble come to those who try their best to serve Him?
4. What historical events and people made Jeremiah preach the way he did?
5. What do you think the book of Jeremiah has to teach us today?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The questions in the student's assignment may be used either as the basis for class recitation and discussion, or they may be used as examination questions. The former is preferred. The objective of this lesson, in either case, is to make the student think through the material that has been studied in order to get an organized grasp of the whole.

Concerning the Questions:

1. If the students have kept their notes carefully this should not be too great a task. It might even be well to suggest to them at the beginning of the semester that they keep a chart on which they write this information lesson by lesson. During this review session such a chart may be written on the board from the students' answers.

2. This may be written or oral. In either case the intention is to summarize the impressions about the man. To put him together, as it were, from the pieces that have been gathered during the past lessons.

3. This set of questions is intended to remind the student of the themes of lessons three through eight.

4. Since much of the material relative to this question is not in the text of the book it may be the one on which the teacher will have to give the most help. It should, however, be in the students' class notes from the teacher's presentations previous to this.

5. This question helps the teacher to measure the attainment of his most important objective--to make Jeremiah useful for the student's daily life.

Lesson X

The Linen Sash

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapter 13. What does God command Jeremiah to do with the linen sash? What does he find on the last trip?
2. What is the application of this incident to Judah?
3. What is meant by the paragraph on wine and drunkenness?
4. What is the message to the king and his mother?
5. What is predicted will happen to Judah?
6. Is there still hope for the nation? On what conditions?
7. What is the meaning of verse 23 ?
8. Compare 23:37-39 with verse 27.
9. Do you think that Jeremiah believed Judah would still return to God? What makes you think so?
10. Does the prophet say something in this chapter that is true of people in general?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

This lesson provides the student with a little break in the heavy course. If so desired one might show pictures from archaeological discoveries of these times during this class session. If reports on special studies are ready by this time those which would contribute most to the class may be read.

The objective of this lesson is to show that: A people

who persist in evil cannot correct their ways at their own discretion. On the positive side of that truth is the offer of God to change their ways for them if they will repent in time.

Treatment of the Questions:

1. There is not full agreement as to the exact time in the life of the prophet when this took place, therefore it cannot be stated just when he took these trips, or if there were some other reasons besides that given here for his going to the Euphrates. At any rate, we know from this that he had been there twice. He was perhaps a rather widely traveled person. His display of geographical and historical knowledge would indicate that he might have been.

2. Notice how in figure after figure the prophet has tried to show God's patience with men. Is God just as patient with people today? Do we sometimes misinterpret His patience with wicked people? What would happen to each of us if God were not patient with the wickedness of people?

3. God's patience does not endure forever. The Greeks said that whom the Gods would destroy they first make mad. How does Jeremiah say it?

4. Wouldn't Jeremiah naturally be considered a "fifth columnist"? What is our attitude today toward negative criticism or defeatist attitudes toward our country in times of trouble? Was it justifiable in the case of Jeremiah? Why?

5. A simple repetition of some of the things he has said before, but worthy of note.

6. God still offers hope on the condition of repentance.

7. Verse 23 expresses the theme of this lesson.

8. Was Jesus perhaps thinking of Jeremiah's words? Did the people in Jesus' time believe him? Do people ever believe such words?

9. This is a subject for discussion. Perhaps Jeremiah believed that they would return because God was still offering them opportunity to repent. Perhaps he continued to plead for repentance only because God wanted him to.

10. Isn't it true of people in every age that habit is hard to break? Isn't it also true that evil habit can with time become impossible to break except by the help of God? The best known modern example of that is that of Alcoholics Anonymous, who will not take on a person unless he declares himself unable to break the force of alcohol, and who then direct him, together with their personal help, to trust in One who can change the leopard's spots.

Lesson XI

Prophets, Priests, and Kings

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 21:11-14; 22; and 23. Give titles of not more than three words to each paragraph and chapter.
2. What is he who sits upon David's throne commanded to do? What will happen if he does? What if he doesn't?
3. Which kings are mentioned in this chapter? What is to happen to each of them?
4. How do you suppose all these prophecies happen to be together here?
5. Who are the sheep and who are the shepherds? Who is responsible for the sheep?
6. What are the names given to the king who is to come? Who is he?
7. What do the false prophets say to the wicked people?
8. From where do they get their message?
9. What is meant by "burden" in this chapter?
10. What will happen to the false prophets and priests?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objective of this lesson is to remind the student that: Professional leaders are singularly responsible before God to preserve righteousness and truth in a nation.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. Chapter 22 is a review of Hebrew history during the

lifetime of Jeremiah up to the reign of Hezekiah. If the class has not been acquainted with the accounts of the reigns of these kings as given in either Kings or Chronicles it might be profitable to spend less of the class time in discussion of the questions and rather have them read those passages from their Bibles. If one half of the class reads II Kings 22 to 24:17 and the other half II Chronicles 34 to 36:10, then the two groups might be asked to compare their stories with the interpretation found in this chapter.

2. Notice in both Kings and Chronicles how Hebrew historians always interpret history. Jeremiah applies the same principles of interpretation here.

3. The answers are clear in the text. It is of interest that such varying things happened to these people. Is there any law or principle which includes all of these turns of events?

4. Two answers are most likely, and others are possible. Perhaps the chapter is a compilation of prophecies made at various times in the ministry of the prophet, or it may be a general review of what has happened, written in the future tense with the assurance that these were the thoughts of God concerning the mentioned kings before the events took place. In any event, let us not permit a small matter of literary form like this to confuse the class to the point where they miss the important principles which are taught therein.

5. The simple answer is obvious. The application to ourselves is not quite so obvious. There are those in the class who are

looking forward to the professions. Are they aware of their responsibility in such positions? Are they prepared and willing to assume those responsibilities, or are they under the impression that one enters a profession purely for his own advancement?

6. The class will likely recognize this as a Messianic prophecy. Did Jeremiah know that Jesus was coming? How much did he know about this coming king? Has his prophecy been fulfilled? Notice that the name Zedekiah means "Jehovah is our righteousness." Does this mean the king who reigned in Jeremiah's time, or is it a play on words? Read a discussion of this verse in a good commentary.

7. These false prophets say to the wicked that God is loving and will not hurt those who despise Him. Are there those today who minimize the wrath and righteousness of God? Are there those who act as though God would not punish unrighteousness?

8. Notice that the Bible claims here, as elsewhere, to be a body of revealed truth rather than truth conceived by human wisdom. God says He didn't send these prophets. Are there false prophets in the world today who are a discredit to Christianity? Has God sent them or have they dreamed their own dreams?

9. A simple word for it might be "message", but it carries more the sense of urgency and compulsion.

10. It is only one more step to ask, "What will happen to any professional group which fails to give the truth to those whom it serves?"

Do not fail to call attention to the carrying away of part of the people at about the time of these chapters.

Lesson XII

The Final Warnings

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 24, 27, 28, and 29. Give titles of not more than three words to each paragraph and chapter.
2. What group of people have hope prophesied to them in these chapters? For what group is there no hope?
3. When were these prophecies given? What had happened to Jerusalem just before?
4. Why does God speak so comfortingly to those in captivity, and so hard to those who are still in Jerusalem?
5. Who are the good and who are the bad figs? (Chapter 24.)
6. What is the lie that the false prophets are telling to Zedekiah? What does Jeremiah say will happen? (Chapter 27.)
7. What is the argument between Hananiah and Jeremiah? What is the test of a prophet? Had Jeremiah met that test? Had Hananiah? What is God's answer to the matter? (Chapter 28.)
8. To whom is Jeremiah's letter sent? What does God expect of them? What will He do for them? (Chapter 29.)
9. What does Shemaiah write to Zephaniah? What is the answer to him? Why is the argument so hot between Jeremiah and the prophets who predict an early return from captivity?
10. Is there any hope of escaping from the power of Babylon? What about the nations around Judah?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objectives of this lesson are to show that: a. There comes a time when a rebellious people are finally cast off without hope. b. God punishes in order to help. c. Some people don't learn from experience.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. By this time the teacher will know if it is necessary to review this item in each class session or if the students can be depended upon to have done it.

2. The hope is for those already in captivity. They have suffered all that they are going to suffer. From here on they are to experience God's goodness as they have experienced His judgments till now. Notice that even to them there is a condition on which they shall be saved. Those still in Jerusalem should have learned from this partial fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy, but they haven't. For them there is only doom. They must submit to Babylon, either willingly or in destruction.

3. These prophecies in the early part of Zedekiah's reign followed the carrying away of Jehoiachin, his mother, many of the best citizens, and many vessels of the temple by Nebuchadrezzar.

4. No doubt there was a penitent spirit among those in captivity. At any rate, God has executed judgment and is now anxious that it shall have some results in changed lives. His wrath has been a reform measure, not pure vengeance. Those remaining in Jerusalem have learned nothing either from the fate of Israel or of their own

people. What further hope is there for such stubborn blindness?

5. Until now the prophet has prophesied only destruction, so that the people, and perhaps the students, have thought that he was a one-track preacher. When the occasion comes for a different message, he has it, but again it is not like the people want it to be.

6. The prophets of peace can be a country's most dangerous enemies on certain occasions. Is it better to say the truth or to be popular? What comes of being popular at the expense of truth?

7. Notice how much Jeremiah wishes that what Hananiah says were true. Notice also the boldness of Jeremiah to speak thus in the temple. Could it be because the events have vindicated him?

8. Notice how Jeremiah can combine national loyalty, the concept of a universal God, and recognition of cold physical facts and bring out of them sober truth and level-headed advice. Would this man be a good candidate for the U. N.? C.? What do the students think that he would have to say in such an organization?

9. The heat of the argument is still caused by national loyalty. The religious leaders of the nation are for the most part so blindly nationalistic that they cannot see the facts, and for that reason consider Jeremiah the arch-enemy of their national welfare. In the consideration of world events, can we look at them only as Americans or must we also look at them as Christians in order to understand them?

10. Call attention to the plot of rebellion against Babylon into which Zedekiah had been drawn at this time. Would Jeremiah

always advise us to give in to a stronger power? Is God always with the largest armies? Is He always with the smallest armies? Does He always fight on the side of those who claim Him as their God? On whose side does He fight? Does He fight on any side?

Lesson XIII

The Siege of Jerusalem

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 21:1-10, 34, 37, and 38. Give titles of not more than three words to each paragraph and chapter.
2. What are the historical events which are mentioned in these chapters? Trace the movements of the Babylonian army as they are indicated here.
3. How many times did Zedekiah ask Jeremiah to pray for him? How many personal interviews did he have with him? Who took the initiative?
4. What is God's answer to the king in chapter 21? What advice was given to the people? Do you suppose it was popular with the army leaders?
5. What was the law of God about bound servants? What did the people of Jerusalem do about their bound servants? What did God say about their action? (Chapter 38.)
6. What does chapter 34 reveal about the character of the people?
7. What did the people hope when Pharaoh's army came out to help them? What did Jeremiah say would happen? (Chapter 37.) What did happen.
8. What happened to Jeremiah when he tried to leave the city? Why? Tell what happened to him from here on. (Chapters 37 and 38.)
9. Was Jeremiah afraid of the king? Did he change his message in

order to save himself? How was he cared for?

10. What kind of man was Zedekiah? Why did he let the nobles do to Jeremiah what they did? Why did he protect Jeremiah? Why didn't he follow Jeremiah's advice?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

This and the following lessons tend to hold the students' interest because of their narrative. Our task is to help them analyse these narratives for their underlying principles.

The objective of this lesson is to: Make clear the contrast in the behavior of Jeremiah and Zedekiah in crises.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. The narrative will probably take care of the values to be derived from this, so it may be well not to take class time to repeat the titles.
2. The history behind these chapters makes them live. Be sure to present it fully. The approaching army, the siege, the lifting of the siege to defeat the Egyptians, and the resumption of the siege. Notice also that by this time Judah was bereft of her allies.
3. This question may help to point out both the desperation of Zedekiah, who would not listen to Jeremiah earlier, and the vacillation which was characteristic of him.
4. There is no hope to save the day and the people are advised to leave the defense of the city and of the temple of God and to flee. Imagine how that must have infuriated the generals. Is

loyalty to a cause sometimes foolishness? Is it sometimes better to admit defeat than to fight for a hopeless cause? Is fighting always the best way to defend a cause?

5. Jeremiah states the law which is given in the Pentateuch. The people likely freed their servants under stress of the siege, either to make them more willing to fight for the city, or in hopes that God would be favorable to them for the act. The servants were likely taken back when the besiegers drew away to meet the Egyptians. What sort of promises do people make under stress of circumstances? Does God care for them?

6. This incident is one more to show how hardened the people were to all truth and righteousness. They were sheer opportunists.

7. Jerusalem, no doubt, laughed at the predictions of Jeremiah, which they had been almost ready to believe, and the false prophets were at their old nationalistic message again. What a talking point they must have had. "Didn't we tell you that in the end nothing could happen to the house of God?"

8. It is no wonder that Jeremiah was arrested as a Babylonian sympathizer.

9. What a picture of strength! Jeremiah seems to have been near the point of death in the dungeon and also in the pit. God once more used the evil of men to praise Him, for it was because the prophet was put into the military stronghold during the siege that he was one of the best cared for in the city. Read about the

famine and disease which prevailed in the city at this time. The contrast between the personalities of Jeremiah and Zedekiah might be forcefully brought out by a dramatic dialogue which would present the interviews of these two men.

10. Poor Zedekiah was torn between his superstitions and the will of the nobles. It is hard to imagine that anything like true religion dwelt in him. He couldn't make up his own mind and stick to it, and he couldn't bear ridicule. Notice the light which is shed on his character by the taunt of his wives in 38:22.

Lesson XIV

The Fall of Jerusalem

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 39 and 52. What is told in both chapters? What is different?
2. Why do you suppose both these chapters are found in the same book? Read 51:64.
3. How long did the siege last? What was the food condition in the city?
4. How were the princes of Babylon able to come and sit in the middle gate of the city? What was the result?
5. What did Zedekiah attempt to do? Was he successful? What happened to him and his family? Where did they come before the king of Babylon?
6. What happened to the city? To the people of the city? How many were carried away? Why not more? Who was left?
7. What happened to Jeremiah? Why do you suppose the Babylonians took this attitude toward him?
8. What happened to the temple? The priests? The vessels of the temple?
9. Is there any indication that the people turned to God during this time?
10. What did Jeremiah do after the city had fallen?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

This lesson pretty much teaches itself. The objective is to get a clear picture of what happened. The facts of the fulfillment of God's prophecy are impressive in themselves. The other thing to notice is the person of Jeremiah. What was his attitude toward all this?

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. A comparison of these chapters shows that they are almost alike. The object in asking the student to compare them is to get him to study the narratives more carefully. There is a tendency to slip lightly over a story and to miss the details.

2. The last chapter was perhaps added by Baruch or some other scribe. In the Hebrew the book bears only the title of "Jeremiah" and does not say whether by him, or about him, or both.

3. In the year and a half of siege matters seem to have become desperate in the city. Remember what Jeremiah prophesied about that in 19:9 and in 21:6.

4. The army was likely so depleted and worn out with hunger and pestilence that when the breach was made the princes of the Chaldeans could boldly appear in the sight of the people at the middle gate. The psychological effect is evident in the flight of the king and the army. Notice that it was the Chaldean people who were the new Babylonians.

5. Jeremiah had said that he would not escape if he did not surrender to Nebuchadrezzar. How this man had desperation

enough to hope against the word of him who had been so accurate in his prophecies is hard to understand.

6. If someone has taken up the project of reproducing the plan of the city it would be interesting to have that project presented at this time as an aid to showing just what happened. Notice that the walls, the palaces, and the common dwellings were all destroyed. Only the poorest of the poor were left. The small number carried away are a testimony to the numbers who must have perished.

7. Notice that Nebuchadrezzar commanded his captain to do with Jeremiah whatever he said. It seems that Jeremiah could have made himself rich, or puppet ruler, but he simply went to live among the people. No doubt Nebuchadrezzar considered Jeremiah his ally.

8. The terribleness of the shock of the destruction of the temple is perhaps unimaginable to us. All the formalities of worship were gone, because there was no longer a temple where God's presence dwelt, and no center of worship. If God had been a local god He would have died at this point, as thousands of gods of history have done. The conception of God which the prophets had given to Israel was only strengthened by these events.

9. There is no indication of a true repentance. No doubt there was fear and much praying of all kinds, but remember the case of the bond servants, and look ahead to the remnant which went to Egypt.

10. As we said, he went back to the city and helped the people who were left rather than to say, "I told you so", and go away.

Lesson XV

What Happened to Those Who Were Left

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 40 to 44, inclusive. Give a title of not more than three words to each paragraph and chapter.
2. What offer is made to Jeremiah? What does he choose? (Chapter 40.)
3. Who is made governor of the land? What plot is formed against him? Why? (Chapter 40.)
4. What does Ishmael do? What do the captains of Judah do? What effect does the whole affair have upon the people? (Chapter 41.)
5. What is the people's petition and promise to Jeremiah? What message do they get from God? Why should God give them this message? (Chapter 42.)
6. How do the people respond to God's message? of what are they afraid? (Chapter 42 and 43.)
7. What is the message of the hidden stones? What is to happen to the Pharaoh of Egypt? (Chapters 42 and 43.)
8. What is the prophecy about the people of Judah who are in Egypt?
9. What do they say is the cause of their misfortunes? (Chapter 44.)
10. About how old was Jeremiah at this time?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objectives of this lesson are to show: a. The utter

corruption of the people to the last man. b. The steadfastness and loyalty of Jeremiah to God's truth and to the people until his very end.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. One might let a student take his list of paragraph titles with him before the class and let him tell the story of these chapters without other preparation or help.

2. The greatness of the man is put to a crucial test. He shows that he had the interests of his people at heart and not his own or their enemies'.

3. The countries round about Judah and Israel always tried to inihilate them. Now that Judah was weak and the walls of Jerusalem were down they took their chance.

4. The effect of the situation was fear of the neighboring nations, and also a fear that since they had allowed the murder of Nebuchadrezzar's governor to happen that the Babylonians would come back and wipe out the countryside irrespective of who had done it. Before they had not been afraid of Babylon when they should have been. Now they were wildly and unreasonably afraid. In either case the prophet has little chance with them--they are not accustomed to listen to the voice of God.

5. God gives them His message. He hopes that they have finally learned to trust Him in spite of outward circumstances, but it seems that before they asked Him they had already decided to go to Egypt. They probably asked Jeremiah only as a matter of form, or,

knowing how much he had formerly warned them against the power of Babylon, they probably thought that he would agree with any plan to get out of harm's way.

6. Their terror of Babylon makes them break their promise. Not only do they leave the country, but they force Jeremiah to go with them. Perhaps they were afraid to leave him and Baruch behind, lest they work mischief for them in their absence. Perhaps they took him along as a bringer of good luck.

7. Jeremiah saw that even Egypt must soon fall before Babylon, and that any people who made themselves part of Egypt would share her fate. If only they would have stayed in Judah they would have been too insignificant for Nebuchadrezzar to bother with.

8. Their utter forgetfulness of all that God tried to teach them through a long series of catastrophic events makes them unfit to survive. There is a note of hope for a few individuals. We know that at least Baruch was with them, and that God had promised that Baruch should not be killed wherever he went.

9. The facts recorded in the book of Jeremiah give the lie to their claim about prospering when they worshiped the queen of heaven. Can a people ever come to such a point in their rejection of the truth that they cannot even see the truth? Have someone look up what the queen of heaven was and bring a picture or model.

10. If he was about twenty when he began to preach, then he was probably over sixty now. The figure of the prophet firm and clear-minded to the last is inspiring. Do we know people like this?

Lesson XVI

A Look Into the Future

A. Student's Assignment

1. Read chapters 30 through 33. Give a title of not more than three words to each paragraph and chapter.
2. When were chapters 32 and 33 written? When does it seem that chapters 30 and 31 were written?
3. How do these chapters differ from chapters 21, 34, 37, and 38? Why do they differ?
4. What were the conditions at the time of this reassuring prophecy?
5. What business deal did Jeremiah make? What did he say about it? What prayer did he make? Why did he make it? (Chapter 32.)
6. What did God promise He would do for the captives of Judah and Israel?
7. What places will be restored? How will they be restored?
8. List the things which God says He has been or will be to them.
9. What kind of covenant will He make with the people? (Chapter 31: 31 and following, and chapter 32:37 and following.) What will He do with His covenants with David and the tribe of Levi?
10. Who will be king when all these things are fulfilled?

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

The objectives of this lesson are to show that: a. God loves His people even when He punishes them. b. To understand God's workings one must take the long view. c. The abiding covenant of

God is in the hearts of men, not in a legal code.

The Treatment of the Questions:

1. It may be necessary to list these headings quickly at the beginning of the class period, or to mention them as the discussion goes along, otherwise the similarity of much of the material will leave a confused blur in the minds of the students.

2. It would seem that all four chapters were written at much the same time, although it may be possible that the first two were written very soon after the fall of Jerusalem.

3. The amazing thing is that these four chapters could come from a man who was at the same time thinking and saying the words of lesson thirteen. Was Jeremiah a "crank" on one subject? Was he obsessed with one idea so he couldn't see anything else? How can a man speak so strongly his message of doom and at the same time declare a message of love and restoration? Are they opposites or do they fit into his total picture of God?

4. Chapters 32 and 33 were given when the siege had already driven the city to desperation. Is it not a mark of his greatness and of his intense faith in God that he could see beyond the horror of the facts before him to the ultimate kindly purpose of God? What does God mean to us in times of trouble or grief? Can we see His loving hand in our misfortunes? Can we look beyond the present and see what God's ultimate intentions are with us?

5. Jeremiah is like the Roman who bought, at its full value, the ground on which the army of Hannibal was encamped. Once

more his faith in God moved him to act in what must have seemed an unreasonable manner. Did his faith stimulate faith in those about him?

6. The return of the captivity must have been a welcome sound to the ears of those who had time to listen, but notice that Jeremiah warns those about him that this hope is for the future, not for the present. At present their wound is incurable. Here and elsewhere Jeremiah can see with God beyond the individuals to the idea for which they stand. God says, "I love Israel, but you are unworthy of that name, therefore I shall destroy you--but I will preserve a nation from among you in spite of you." Can God's plans be ultimately defeated by people who oppose him?

7. Notice the special references to Ephraim, Samaria, Judah, and Jerusalem. Show on the map that not only the area around Jerusalem, but the northern kingdom also is to come back to the Jews.

8. Here is a list of pictures of the love and patience of God. Do they not remind us of the New Testament conception of Him? Under what conditions were these concepts born? Must it always be so?

9. Notice that God's covenants with David and the Levites were one-sided. God alone swore to those, and He kept them. The covenant with the people was entered into by both parties at Sinai and at later times. Since the people had broken their part, God had been forced to give up His part. The true covenant is to be in the heart rather than in the form of a statement, or a ritual, or a temple, or a set of laws. Did Jeremiah understand what Christianity would be when it came? Is Christianity something that is inside of us--a part of us, graven on the nature of the inner self? Do we

know of people to whom Christianity is just a bargain between themselves and God?

10. Once more the mind of the prophet reaches out toward that time and person when perfection shall be realized. He doesn't know who he will be, and therefore he gives him a symbolical name. All that he knows is that this person will be of David's line, and that he will bring Israel to serve the Lord in spirit and in truth; and that then Israel will become the wonder and admiration of all the world, and all the earth will flock to it on pilgrimages to see and experience its spiritual greatness. Close the class with I Peter 1:3-12.

Lesson XVII

Review Lesson

A. Student's Assignment

1. Why, does Jeremiah say, was Jerusalem destroyed and the people taken into captivity?
2. Who is responsible for the behavior of the people? Was it only the great and wealthy who were wicked?
3. What is God's purpose in the punishment of His people?
4. Be prepared to tell the following stories:
 - a. The linen sash.
 - b. The yoke.
 - c. The argument between Hananiah and Jeremiah.
 - d. What happened to Jeremiah during the siege.
 - e. The events which followed the fall of Jerusalem until the flight into Egypt.
5. Did Jeremiah's prophecies come true? During his lifetime?
6. Describe the character of Jeremiah. How has he changed since he was a young man?
7. Relate the main events in the world history of Jeremiah's lifetime, and show how they affected his message.
8. What promise did God make to the people who went into the captivity?
9. Be prepared to give a list of the names of the kings of Judah who reigned during Jeremiah's life, and to tell what they did that was of importance to this book, and what happened to them.

10. What decides how a nation will prosper?

Illustrate all your answers to the above questions by examples from the book of Jeremiah.

B. Suggestions to the Teacher

Although it will be best to discuss these review questions in class, they might also be left largely as the student's own guide in preparation for the final examination, and part of the class time be taken up by the presentation of special reports or projects. The teacher should be guided in the treatment of this lesson by what will be most helpful to the class.

Lesson XVIII

Final Examination

Part I. The Times of Jeremiah

1. Beside each name in the column at the left write the proper number from the middle column and the proper letter from the column at the right. For instance, Nabopalassar (in the left hand column) was a king of Babylon (center column) and helped to overthrow Assyria (in the right hand column); so beside his name we place the number "2" and the letter "h".

<u>2</u> <u>h</u> Nabopalassar	1. A king of Egypt	a. Tried to reform Judah.
___ ___ Evil-Merodach	2. A king of Babylon	b. Defeated Josiah and killed him.
___ ___ Gedeliah	3. A king of Judah	c. Defeated Necho.
___ ___ Necho	4. A governor of Judah.	d. Was murdered by men from Ammon.
___ ___ Josiah		e. Was taken to Egypt.
___ ___ Jehoahaz		f. Put on the throne by the king of Egypt.
___ ___ Jehoiachin		g. Taken to Babylon together with his mother.
___ ___ Hophra		h. Helped to overthrow Assyria.
___ ___ Jehoiachim		i. Defended Jerusalem during the last sieges.
___ ___ Zedekiah		j. Became king after Nebuchadrezzar.
___ ___ Nebuchadrezzar		k. Tried to help Judah against Babylon.

2. Name the two most powerful nations of Jeremiah's time.
_____, _____.
3. Name two important battles and tell briefly what effect they had on Judah. a. _____.

b. _____.
4. What was Nebuchadrezzar's reason for attacking Jerusalem?
5. What was his reason for destroying it?

Part II. The Life of Jeremiah

1. About how old was Jeremiah when he became a prophet? _____
Why do you think this is so?
2. Who was Jeremiah?
Where did he die? _____
How long did he prophecy? _____
How many children did he have? _____
3. Under which king of Judah did he begin his ministry? _____
Under how many did he prophecy? _____
How many of them were favorable to him? _____
What important discovery was made about at the time that he began to prophecy?
4. What was the attitude of most of the people toward him?
5. On a separate sheet write a 100-word description of the character of Jeremiah.

Part III. The Teachings of Jeremiah

Answer the following questions as briefly as possible. Give an example from the book of Jeremiah to illustrate your answer to each question.

1. What power controls the events of history?
2. What decides the fate of a nation?
3. What is the work of a prophet?
4. What kind of worship does God want?
5. Does God let trouble come to those whom He loves? _____.
Why, or why not?
6. Are prophets born or made?
7. Who is responsible for what a nation does?
8. What did Jeremiah say was the reason for the destruction of Jerusalem?
9. Is God a god of love or of justice?
10. Briefly tell one of the parables of Jeremiah and its meaning.

Key to the Final Examination

Part I

1.

2	j
4	d
1	b
3	a
3	e
3	g
1	k
3	f
3	i
2	c
2. Babylon and Egypt.
3. a. The battle of Megiddo. Josiah killed, Jehoahaz deposed and taken to Egypt, Jehoiachim put in his place, Egypt controls Western Asia.
b. Battle of Carchemish. The power of Egypt broken by Babylon, which from here on dominates Western Asia. Judah, which had become an ally of Egypt, was thenceforth on the losing side.
4. The revolt of Zedekiah.
5. The constant trouble which the city was causing as the center of frequent rebellions.

Part II

1. About 20 year old. He calls himself a child in chapter 1.
2. A priest of Anathoth. The son of Hilkiah.
He likely died in Egypt.
He prophesied perhaps about 40 years.
He had no children. He never married.

3. Josiah.

Five.

Only Josiah

The Book of the Law.

4. During most of his life most of the people considered him a traitor and either feared or hated him.

5. -----

Part III

1. The power of God.

2. Its morality, social ethics, and its relationship to God ultimately decide the fate of a nation.

3. To speak for God.

4. A sincere worship which affects the worshiper's attitude toward God and his conduct toward his fellow men.

5. Yes. We don't know all the answers, but one is to strengthen their faith in Him, another is to teach them lessons they should know, and a third is that through their suffering they may help others.

6. Both, and.

7. All the people, but especially the leaders.

8. Forsaking God and His laws

9. He is both.

10. -----

Supplement A

I. Subjects for Special Study

1. Jeremiah and the kings of his period. (This may be subdivided into smaller units.)
2. Jeremiah and the false prophets.
3. The visions of Jeremiah.
4. The predictions of Jeremiah.
5. The prayers of Jeremiah.
6. Character studies of the five kings, and of Baruch.
7. The moral conditions of Jeremiah's times.
8. Jerusalem of the present compared with Jeremiah's prophecy.
(Chapter 30.)
9. Traits in Jeremiah worthy of imitation.
10. Social teachings of Jeremiah.
11. The sins of Judah that brought her downfall.
12. The complaints of Jeremiah.
13. The sufferings of Jeremiah.
14. The poetry of Jeremiah.
15. Daily life in Jeremiah's time.
16. The religion of the neighboring nations.
17. The religion of Egypt.
18. The religion of Babylon.
19. Studies of animals, plants, and agriculture as represented in Jeremiah.
20. The parables of Jeremiah.

II. Projects

1. Prepare a map showing the places mentioned in the book.
2. Make dolls in the costume of the times.
3. Prepare a scale drawing of the city of Jerusalem as it was in Jeremiah's day.
4. Make models of brazier, yoke, pot, potter's wheel, chariot, and scroll.
5. Make a contour map of Jerusalem and its environs.

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volume of the famous Cambridge Bible For Schools and Colleges. It is a standard commentary and should be available in any good theological library.

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CHAPTER IV
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

With the completion of this course of study in the book of Jeremiah it is hoped that the average high school Senior will have gained several things.

It is hoped that he will have gained a valuable insight into the life and thought of a great prophet. From him he should have learned that great men are human, and have their inward struggles like everybody else; but more important, he should have gained strength to fight his own inward battles through the example of Jeremiah's reliance^{on} the Source of strength. Also, he should have learned to understand in a greater measure those who proclaim the word of God in these his own times.

From Jeremiah's message, and the events of the times as they illustrated that message, the student should have seen anew that it is better to speak the truth than to be popular; that it is better to be in trouble on God's side than to have selfish ease by drifting with evil doers; that morality has sound reasons supporting it; and that truth and right cannot be thwarted indefinitely.

He should, furthermore, have learned about God that He is loving and that He is just; and that He will deal in love or in justified anger in accordance with men's dealings with Him. He should see how great the patience and love of God really are, and that ~~that~~ this Friend will spare no means—even the means of rigorous punish-

ment--to bring the greatest spiritual good to His own. He should have felt with the prophet that God is universal and all-powerful, and that nothing can ultimately keep Him from His wise purposes. And concerning our relationship to Him, it should have been re-emphasized to him that God desires the adoration of a sincere heart and a righteous life toward men, rather than empty professions or formalistic observances.

Concerning the forces that move in history , through this study there should have begun to dawn upon him the theistic philosophy that behind every cosmic event is the all-knowing power of One who works irresistably toward His own good ends; that men and nations may seek to defeat him, but that He turns their evil designs to do His work, so that even the wrath of men does praise Him.

Finally, then, he should have been inspired to ask himself if he has not also been called to work for God in his own way; and have been encouraged to find God able to make him a strong, fenced city and a brazen wall against the evil that he would overcome in his daily life.

These are high aims, but they are the teachings of the prophet Jeremiah which it has been attempted to bring out in these lesson plans. Whether they are achieved or not depends on many things, the greatest of which is that factor about which nothing can be done on paper--the person of the teacher. May he or she find strength and direction in the person and message of Jeremiah.

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