

This week's Audio, Video, and Teaching Notes are posted here.

The Greatest Discovery – Class Nine (Biblical Markers of Josiah's Reign; The Eighteenth Year of Josiah's Reign; Josiah's Ongoing Restoration; Hilkiah's Great Discovery – I Have Found the Sefer of the LORD that Moses Wrote; Shaphan Reads the Sefer to the King; The Keepers of the Holy; Put it Beside the Chest; The Tablets – Take Two; The Ark's Not There; Prior History of the Ark; What About the Scroll; Your Words were Found; Those Who Utter What is Precious Will be My Mouth; Those Who Handle the Torah Don't Know Me; The Moses Scroll – This is the Way, Walk in It; Josiah Dies in Battle; The Laments of Jeremiah)

January 21, 2023 – Ross Nichols

Audio/Video Links:

<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/the-greatest-discovery/>
& <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2x8bIzjmFfc>

Teaching Notes Link:

<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023.1.21-The-Greatest-Discovery-Class-Nine.pdf>

TODAY'S INTRODUCTION

-Welcome to United Israel World Union, this is our Sabbath morning scripture study coming to you live from the United Israel Center South in Saint Francisville, Louisiana. Shabbat Shalom and thank you for joining us this morning.

-Jer 1:1 "The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin." This so begins the Hebrew bible's Book of Jeremiah and so begins our journey into a new and informative study on "The World and Words of Jeremiah the Prophet". Unlike any other book among the Prophets there is nothing that is more of a seed bed for the immersing biblical faiths, post the biblical period as both Judaism and Christianity draw heavily upon the book and words attributed to the prophet Jeremiah.

-Throughout this study I'll show a connectedness between Deuteronomy and Jeremiah by carefully analyzing the contents of the Book of Jeremiah with two main focuses. We'll focus heavily on the text of Jeremiah in accordance with the context of the book. I also want to put you inside the text of the prophet Jeremiah in the ancient world in which he lived by imagining the scenery around us and seeing how the people, characters, and personalities come to life in front of your very eyes. We'll do everything we can to put you back to the 6th century BCE and work through the story as it unfolds.

-In this study we'll also draw on sources other than the Hebrew texts of the Masoretic bible such as found in the Septuagint, the Greek version and on the Dead Sea Scrolls drawing attention to the differences between them regarding the same material, The Book of Jeremiah. As I research and prepare for these classes, I'll also be looking at the original languages and consulting them to help make my intended point. We'll also learn quite a bit from archaeological discoveries as well.

-The order and arrangement of the material of these classes depends upon how I feel led to go with the class and that's developed as I prepare the material. Sometimes I'll follow a chronological order and at other times I'll prepare a class or classes on a more topical

overview and take a subject and do our horizontal study method. I intend to take a word, a verse, a paragraph, a chapter, or a section of text and build around it the ancient biblical context so that I can put you in the story. I'll be building a running commentary on the life and times of Jeremiah as we work through the book attributed to him.

-It's interesting that large sections of this book are presented as the actual words of Jeremiah. Based on things we've learned about authorship; we've recognized other hands in these texts, the hands of editors, redactors, or scribes. When it comes to Jeremiah, not only do we know a scribe that worked for Jeremiah by the name of Baruch ben Neriah. We also get an indication as to parts of the book that he himself wrote and not Jeremiah.

-Much of the book introduces oracles of Jeremiah which seem to be written or could be written by Jeremiah's own hand. Many of these examples written by the hand of Jeremiah are written in the first person. This does not prove that Jeremiah wrote it just because a text is in the first person, but it gets us as close as we can at arriving at that possible conclusion. When we read where Jeremiah says, "and the word of the LORD was to me", we're going to believe this represents a form of Jeremiah's original oracle. Get ready to follow and trust the text to get us as close as we can to the historical, authentic message of Jeremiah of Anathoth, and help us to be "Honest to Jeremiah".

TEACHING NOTES

-Within the World and Words of Jeremiah we're focused on a particular time frame within a larger period of time. We are focusing in on the time of King Josiah. In Jeremiah 1 we are introduced to the fact that Jeremiah is a prophet during the final kings of Judah. Here, Jeremiah becomes a prophet and first hears the word of the LORD in the thirteenth year of Josiah. As we look at Josiah's reign, we have several markers of time. We have the story of Josiah's reign in 2 Kings 22-23 and 2 Chronicles 34-35.

Biblical Markers of Josiah's Reign

-In that material we get a few markers, the first being he becomes king at 8 years old on the assassination of his father Amon. In Chronicles, in the eighth year of his reign he begins to seek the God of his father David. Another marker notes that in the twelfth year, Josiah begins a purge of Judah and Jerusalem and begins to incorporate some of his godly behavior. Then we go to the eighteenth year of his reign. The final marker that's covered in the reign of Josiah is his death. The biggest part of what we know about Josiah's reign comes from the eighteenth year of his reign and in this year the most incredible things take place.

The Eighteenth Year of Josiah's Reign

-The eighteenth year of Josiah's reign puts us in 622 BCE. In this eighteenth year, from Chronicles we know that for several years sought after the God of David and begun to do this purge. In the eighteenth year we read in both Kings and Chronicles that King Josiah calls to him a man by the name of Shaphan the scribe / secretary. He dispatches him and assigns him a major project where he's going to repair the house of the LORD. He's told to team up with Hilkiah the high priest for this great work of reparation and restoration of the house of the LORD which according to Chronicles, the kings of Judah have let go to ruin. In both Kings and Chronicles, what we get is that the high priest's name is Hilkiah. If you read Josephus it's, Eliakim. In the biblical accounts, there are often more names than one for particular people.

Josiah's Ongoing Restoration

-Last week we focused in on the idea that the kings of Judah have let the house go to ruin. We worked through some of the different kings and various kings had let various parts of the house go to ruin. There were plenty of bad kings, but even good kings would take things from the house and give it away in order to secure peace with an attacking enemy. Now I want to focus on this restoration that's ongoing. It's during this restoration that the greatest discovery of all time took place.

-Hilkiah's Great Discovery – I Have Found the Sefer of the LORD that Moses Wrote

-2Chr 34: 14 While they were bringing out the money that had been brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD given through Moses.

-What the writer is telling us is that during the restoration he brings out of the house something that he's found, and it's clearly described as a sefer, a written account. We don't know what it's written on but it's an account of the instruction of God in the hand of Moses. What Hilkiah finds is a written account of the instruction of God that Moses wrote. A work that can be traced back to Moses.

-2Chr 34: 15 Then Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan.

-2Kin 22: 8 And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

-Shaphan Reads the Sefer to the King

-We don't know how long it took Shaphan to read it, but we get the impression that it's handed to him, and he reads it right there on the spot. What is he reading? What's handed to him? What's contained within this sefer? How big is it? How many chapters? How many books? Does he read an entire library of books? Does he read from Genesis 1:1 – Deuteronomy 34:12 which is generally what people tend to think what he read? Then the text tells us that he brings it to Josiah.

-Shaphan has received the sefer, generally a written account / record of the instruction of God, he walks in and he begins to update Josiah on the work of the restoration of the house. Then he says, Hilkiah gave a scroll to me. Kings says, and he read it to the king. He read it when Hilkiah gave it to him and now he reads it to the king. Chronicles doesn't tell us that Shaphan read it before going to the king. It says, when he goes before the king that he read in it. It does give you the option that he doesn't read the whole scroll. What did he read to the king? Is he reading beginning in Genesis 1? That's not the impression that we get.

-A couple of points about this discovery that are very important to make at this juncture. The language is very clear at least according to our sources, 2 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 34, what is described as being found is not a copy of the scroll that Moses wrote, it is THE scroll that Moses wrote. The very scroll that Moses wrote by the direction of God for the children of Israel.

-PAUSE: This has become the focus of everything that I've worked on for the past few years. What was in that scroll? What was in that sefer and what did it say? Could it really be that the scroll that was found by Hilkiah goes back to the very hand of Moses? Back to the time of Moses, could it be the original? That's what Kings and Chronicles tell us. That it is the original. Depending upon when you date the Exodus is how old is the scroll at the time. Let's say it's approximately 800 years old. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were

found in the winter of 46/47, it's been confirmed that these scrolls date back approximately 2,000 years. Some of these scrolls were found in really good shape. In an environment where it would have been protected, it would have been in good shape. They found this scroll approximately 800 years old. I want to really focus in on this discovery. Where was it found? Where would you expect to find it? We know where you'd expect it to be, but where would you go? Let's talk about what's claimed to be the discovered sefer. What is it that they found? According to Kings and Chronicles, this is what they found. They say it's the one that Moses wrote.

-Deu 31: 9 Then Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel.

-It says that Moses wrote this Torah. After he writes it, he gives it to a group, the priests, the sons of Levi. Specifically, to the ones who carry the ark. This is a specific group and I've taught on this in the past.

-The Keepers of the Holy

-(6) Torah – Keepers of the Holy – Class Six (The Great Discovery; Josiah's Great Reform; Following the Words of Moses Scroll; Where is the Ark of the Covenant; Where was the Moses Scroll Concealed; Josiah's Passover; The Sons of Levi – Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; Service of the Holy Things; Oxen and Wagons; The Sons of Kohath; The Sons of Amram – Aaron and Moses; Solomon Anointed King; Adonijah is Killed; Abiathar is Banished to Anathoth; Kohathites and the Most Sacred Things Carried on Shoulders; Jeremiah – Son of Hilkiyah; The Words of YHVH in the Mouth of a Prophet like Moses; Jeremiah and Josiah Overlap for 18 Years; The Potential for Redemption is Ripe; Jeremiah Laments the Death of Josiah; Jeremiah's Prophecies; Treacherous Sister Judah and Faithless Israel; The Ark of the Covenant won't be Missed; Burning Questions)

September 12, 2020 – Ross Nichols

Audio/Video Link:

<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/torah-keepers-of-the-holy-class-six/>

Teaching Notes: <https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Teaching-Notes-2020.9.12-Torah-Keepers-of-the-Holy-Class-Six.pdf>

-It's not just any Levite, it's very specific, it's the ones who carry the ark. This account that I just read is in the third person meaning that someone is telling me that Moses wrote a book. What I'm reading from doesn't necessarily have to be that book, but the book that I am reading from tells me that Moses wrote a book, a sefer.

-Put it Beside the Chest

-Deu 31: 24 When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end, 25 Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, 26 "Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against you.

-The writer of this book is telling us about another book. This other book is the sefer that Moses wrote. Moses completed writing this book and we're told about it in Deuteronomy 31. He completes it to the very end. Take this sefer and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant. The little book that Moses wrote and wrote it to the very end and entrusted to the Levites, the writer of Deuteronomy is telling me about this book. He's not telling me about Deuteronomy, he's telling me about a book that Deuteronomy tells me about. In

Hebrew, the word aron means a chest or a box. The box of the covenant or the covenant chest, popularly called the ark of the covenant. Moses says, put this sefer that I've written to the very end and put it beside / next to the ark. Put it beside the aron, beside the chest. It's not inside the box, it's beside it. What's inside the box is reserved for what someone else wrote.

-We have two of the most sacred items according to the bible. We have two stone tablets, according to accounts in the Pentateuch written with the finger of God on both sides. That's what the box is for, you have what God wrote. What Moses wrote is put beside the box.

-Deu 10: 1 "At that time the LORD said to me, 'Cut for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to me on the mountain and make an ark of wood. 2 And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets that you broke, and you shall put them in the ark.' 3 So I made an ark of acacia wood, and cut two tablets of stone like the first, and went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. 4 And he wrote on the tablets, in the same writing as before, the Ten Commandments that the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly. And the LORD gave them to me. 5 Then I turned and came down from the mountain and put the tablets in the ark that I had made. And there they are, as the LORD commanded me."

-This is a first-person account. We have another account of the second set of tablets from Exodus 34 which does not agree in every detail with what we read in Deuteronomy 10. That is very clear and indisputable, and we've talked about that in other classes.

-The Tablets – Take Two

-The Tablets – Take Two (Recap on The Testimony – Everything Points to It; Exodus 32 – This Great Sin; Moses Intercedes for the Children of Israel; Everyone Dies for His Own Sin; Jeremiah's Proverb; Deuteronomy 9 – Moses First Person Account; Aaron is at Fault; Exodus 34 – God Reveals His Character; Deuteronomy 10 – The Second Set of Tablets; The Ark of the Covenant; David's Son Builds a House for the Name of YHVH; The Ark is Moved and Removed; The Ark is Gone)

May 25, 2019 – Ross Nichols

Audio/Video Link: <https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/the-tablets-take-two/>

Teaching Notes: <https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Teaching-Notes-2019.5.25-The-Two-Tablets-Take-Two.pdf>

-If you choose to, I encourage you to go take a look at these accounts, Deuteronomy 10 and Exodus 34. Deuteronomy 10 is interesting because it's a first-person account and Exodus 34 is not. In Deuteronomy 10 it tells us that the two stone tablets are put into a box that Moses built and he did. Elsewhere in the Pentateuch we get a story about Bezalel and Oholiab making the aron and it has these cherubim on the box. There is a box that Moses makes which is designed to hold within it the two tablets that God wrote on with his finger. That's it, nothing else goes in the box.

-1Kin 8: 9 There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

-2Chr 5: 10 There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets that Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

-The Ark's Not There

-Religious traditions want to put all sorts of things in there that don't have the support of the Hebrew bible. Inside the ark is nothing but two tablets of the covenant. On the outside, beside the ark is the sefer Torah from Moses' hand. The sefer of Moses was completed and entrusted to the Levites who carried the ark. When Hilkiah discovers the sefer Torah of Moses there's no mention that the ark isn't there. The single greatest event that takes place in this world and words of Jeremiah the prophet, particularly within the reign of Josiah, is this great discovery. It's not that the ark wasn't mentioned, we are going to see that it wasn't there. We know at one point, according to the writers of the bible, it was there.

-Prior History of the Ark

-1Kin 8: 6 Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the cherubim. 7 For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles. 8 And the poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the Holy Place before the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside. And they are there to this day. 9 There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt. (Also found in 2 Chronicles 5)

-This text has a ring of antiquity because of the statement that I read, where it says, you can still see it to this day. This is in Solomon's time, we are at that point in the narrative where Solomon is about to dedicate the house of the LORD. The house is completed and he has the priests bring the ark of the covenant and put it in its place. If some think that it remained there, we'll see if that holds up according to the biblical account. It's interesting that it's not directly mentioned again until the days of Josiah and Jeremiah. Isaiah is contemporary with Hezekiah.

-Isa 37: 14 Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 15 And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: 16 "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. 17 Incline your ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. 18 Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their lands, 19 and have cast their gods into the fire. For they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. (Also found in 2 Kings 19:14-19)

-Some might say that Hezekiah, being at the temple is making reference to the ark of the covenant because of the phrase, you who sit upon the cherubim, but it doesn't say that specifically. This is sometimes thought to be a suggestion that up until the time of Hezekiah the ark remained in the house of the LORD. But it doesn't specifically say that. We know that Jeremiah and Josiah mention the ark roughly in 622 BCE. In the 7th Century BCE, 100 years after Hezekiah, they do mention the ark, but it's strangely mentioned and suggesting that it wasn't in the house. How do we know that?

-Jer 3: " 6 The LORD said to me in the days of King Josiah: "Have you seen what she did, that faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and there played the whore?"

-Jer 3: 16 And when you have multiplied and been fruitful in the land, in those days, declares the LORD, they shall no more say, "The ark of the covenant of the LORD." It shall not come to mind or be remembered or missed; it shall not be made again.

-This tells me, at that time those things are happening. It's not going to come to mind and they're not going to remember it. They're not going to miss it and there's not going to be another one. It's almost an argument from silence, but it's more than that because he's giving key things which are being said, and thought, and remembered. Suggesting that at that time, it is missed, it is coming to mind, and there are people who may be talking about making another. Where is it? We are in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign and Hilkiah goes in and discovers the scroll and tells Shaphan about it. Maybe he just didn't mention that the ark wasn't in there. After the discovery and the house has been repaired, there's a description of a great celebration and a festival and Josiah says the following...

-2Chr 35: 3 And he said to the Levites who taught all Israel and who were holy to the LORD, "Put the holy ark in the house that Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, built. You need not carry it on your shoulders. Now serve the LORD your God and his people Israel.

-When he says, take the ark, he's talking to a specific group of Levites who understood, the ones who were holy to the LORD implying that maybe not all were. He's talking to a group of understanding Levites, the ones who carry it on their shoulders. They are the certain group that were entrusted with this box from the beginning and with the scroll. Put that chest of the covenant in the house that Solomon built. Now they don't have to carry it on their shoulders anymore. I thought in 1 Kings 8 they put it in the temple, clearly, they put it in there and it was no longer born on their shoulders. At some point it must have been pulled out. Perhaps these understanding ones were fearful that one of these kings of Judah who let the place go to ruin would somehow let this go to ruin as well? This command of the king to put the ark in the temple comes after the discovery of the scroll that was written by Moses. So, it wasn't in the house at the time of the discovery.

-If the scroll was discovered in the days of Josiah and it was not beside the ark as we know it should have been, then at some point in history the two became separated. There are lots of Rabbinic legends as to where exactly it was discovered. The point is the ark is not there and the scroll is found.

-Jer 3: 16 And when you have multiplied and been fruitful in the land, in those days, declares the LORD, they shall no more say, "The ark of the covenant of the LORD." It shall not come to mind or be remembered or missed; it shall not be made again.

-This must be written either before the ark is put back in there or after the ark had been placed back in there and maybe pulled back out. It seems to occur during the days of Josiah. Maybe the ark was put back in there during the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign according to 2 Chronicles 35:3. Then at some point between the eighteenth year of his reign and his death in the 31st year it's pulled back out and then Jeremiah is saying... I know you guys are talking about the ark that's missing, but there's coming a day when you won't even think about it, you won't remember it, it's not going to come to mind, you won't miss it, and another one won't be built. These are the two options, but it has to fall within a nineteen year window when it comes up missing. How do I know that?

-We know that it's pulled out again because when the temple is ransacked we know that Jeremiah will see it through to the destruction and sacking of the house of the LORD.

When you see 2 Kings 25 or Jeremiah 52 there is a record of what is taken as booty by the pillagers and the ark is not mentioned. That would be mentioned if it was there. The ark is not mentioned again after 2 Chronicles 35:3. Rabbinic sources propose that King Josiah hid it and this could work because he knows that it's there. We know that he dies and later the temple is sacked. When it's sacked, the ark is not mentioned. It could have happened in Josiah's day and he could have had something to do with its disappearance? Another theory is that Jeremiah hid the ark. It mentions this in the book of 2 Maccabees. It talks about how Jeremiah took the ark and the tent and took them into Trans-Jordan. At any rate it's not mentioned again in the historical narratives after Josiah puts it back in.

-What About the Scroll

-If the ark mysteriously showed up and then disappeared in the days of Josiah and Jeremiah, and the scroll mysteriously showed up and then disappeared in the days of Josiah and Jeremiah, can I say that? Where is the scroll? In a text with no indicator of when it happens, I'm going to take you to a text and suggest to you that Jeremiah is speaking about the discovered scroll. Does Jeremiah mention the scroll that was discovered? When the scroll is discovered, he's been a prophet for five to six years. His prophecy career begins in the thirteenth year of Josiah and the scroll is discovered in the eighteenth year.

-Your Words were Found

-Jer 15: 16 Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O LORD, God of hosts.

-Some might say that this doesn't actually refer to the discovery of a scroll, it might not be literal but more of a general sense. Maybe it just means, I ate your words. We do have an example of something like that idea in Ezekiel 3. The scroll is discovered in Josiah's day, and it's called the sefer Torah of YHVH through Moses. This is the word of God through Moses. I believe he's saying here, your words were found. Remember in Jeremiah 1:9 when Jeremiah is called, this is five to six years before the discovery of the scroll. We have this account where God reaches out his hand and I therefore put my words in your mouth.

-Eze 2: 1 And he said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you." 2 And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. 3 And he said to me, "Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day. 4 The descendants also are impudent and stubborn: I send you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' 5 And whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) they will know that a prophet has been among them. 6 And you, son of man, be not afraid of them, nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions. Be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. 7 And you shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear, for they are a rebellious house. 8 "But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Be not rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you." 9 And when I looked, behold, a hand was stretched out to me, and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. 10 And he spread it before me. And it had writing on the front and on the back, and there were written on it words of lamentation and mourning and woe.

-Eze 3: 1 And he said to me, "Son of man, eat whatever you find here. Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." 2 So I opened my mouth, and he gave me this scroll to eat. 3 And he said to me, "Son of man, feed your belly with this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it." Then I ate it, and it was in my mouth as sweet as honey. 4 And he said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with my words to them. 5 For you are not sent to a people of foreign speech and a hard language, but to the house of Israel-- 6 not to many peoples of foreign speech and a hard language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I sent you to such, they would listen to you. 7 But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me: because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. 8 Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads. 9 Like emery harder than flint have I made your forehead. Fear them not, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house." 10 Moreover, he said to me, "Son of man, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart, and hear with your ears. 11 And go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' whether they hear or refuse to hear."

-He strengthens him and ultimately, he goes. Here we get the idea that God's words are represented by a vision at least of a scroll. How literally are we to take this, I don't know? The idea is that when God gives a scroll the words then become part of that prophet, then the prophet speaks. So, this could be figurative as well as far as the eating. I don't think that Ezekiel physically ate a scroll, but he's going to take the message that he consumes. When I read from Jeremiah, your words were found, and I ate them. It's interesting that in the days of Jeremiah that a scroll was found containing God's words by the hands of Moses. Then Jeremiah consumes these words and goes forth. There's a high likelihood that Jeremiah is in the know particularly if Hilkiah, the discoverer of the scroll is the same Hilkiah as Jeremiah's father. We don't know, but it's interesting. Jeremiah says that he ate these words.

-Those Who Utter what is Precious Will be My Mouth

-Jer 15: 16 Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O LORD, God of hosts. 17 I did not sit in the company of revelers, nor did I rejoice; I sat alone, because your hand was upon me, for you had filled me with indignation. 18 Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will you be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail? 19 Therefore thus says the LORD: "If you return, I will restore you, and you shall stand before me. If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless, you shall be as my mouth. They shall turn to you, but you shall not turn to them.

-A scroll is discovered in Jeremiah's day and he consumes the words of this scroll. He complains to God but God says, you go forward with what you've learned and you're going to speak my words to them and you're going to pull the precious from the worthless. When Jeremiah goes forward, there are quite a few things that he says are worthless. That's an interesting study. In Jeremiah's day he has a lot of religious teachers around him saying that everything is good. We've restored the temple, and everything is going to be great. Everybody is talking about this great revival in the land. Kings and Chronicles says that there's a revival in the land.

-God tells Jeremiah, it's not going to be easy. You've eaten my words that were found. You're going to bring forth the precious from the worthless. You're going to be my

mouth. Does Jeremiah bring forth precious things and highlight them? Does he identify that that have become or were always worthless? What does he say?

-Those Who Handle the Torah Don't Know Me

-One thing Jeremiah says during his career is that those who have snatched the Torah, they don't know me. It's actually God speaking through Jeremiah says, those who handle the Torah don't know me.

-Jer 2: 8 The priests did not say, 'Where is the LORD?' Those who handle the law did not know me; the shepherds transgressed against me; the prophets prophesied by Baal and went after things that do not profit.

-Jer 6: 19 Hear, O earth; behold, I am bringing disaster upon this people, the fruit of their devices, because they have not paid attention to my words; and as for my law, they have rejected it.

-These are the same words that when they were found, Jeremiah ate them. They didn't pay attention to that, nor did they do anything except to reject the Torah. All of this appears to be in the days of Josiah.

-Jer 8: 8 "How can you say, 'We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us'? But behold, the lying pen of the scribes has made it into a lie.

-That's what Jeremiah says after he's eaten the words of the true Torah.

-Jer 9: 12 Who is the man so wise that he can understand this? To whom has the mouth of the LORD spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined and laid waste like a wilderness, so that no one passes through? 13 And the LORD says: "Because they have forsaken my law that I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice or walked in accord with it, 14 but have stubbornly followed their own hearts and have gone after the Baals, as their fathers taught them.

-The Moses Scroll – This is the Way, Walk in It

-In the days of Josiah and Jeremiah a Torah was actually discovered and it was put before them. He presented this and said, this is the way, walk in it, but they said, we will not walk in it. In Josiah and Jeremiah's day, the scroll that Moses wrote was rediscovered by a priest named Hilkiah. It's the original Moses scroll. It is the original scroll that came through Moses and was set before the people. Jeremiah ate these words. Do we know what's in the scroll? What do our sources provide by way of clues or hints? I've covered this before so I won't go into the details.

-(12) Honest to Moses – The Pentateuch – Who, What, and Whence – Class Twelve

(Who Wrote the Pentateuch; The Bible Means What it Says; Discerning What Moses Wrote – A Careful Analysis of the Text; Indicators of Another Time – Evidence of a Non-Contemporary Hand; Authorship and Dating; Making Use of a Source; Allowing the Text to Speak; Moses Writes a Travel Itinerary; Examples of Insertions Within the Text; A Comparison of the Wilderness Journey – Numbers 33 vs. Deuteronomy 10; The Death of Aaron – Mount Hor vs. Moserah; The Molten Calf and The Other Ark of the Covenant; Chronology of the Biblical Narrative)

August 14, 2021 – Ross Nichols

Audio/Video Links:

<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/honest-to-moses-the-pentateuch-who-when-and-whence/> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3unTXQ4nda4>

Teaching Notes Link: <https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2021.8.14-Honest-to-Moses-The-Pentateuch-Who-When-and-Whence-Class-Twelve.pdf>

-If you look at the reformative actions, it seems to be a text very similar to Deuteronomy. Some say that if you look at Ezra and Nehemiah, this is not the time that I'm talking about. We are focused on 622 BCE, the closest you can get to the original Torah that Moses wrote. We are not talking about the one that Ezra is talking about. I do think they are different. We are talking about the scroll that was found in the days of Josiah and Jeremiah and Zephaniah. Jeremiah is shocked. Lying pen of the scribes. If you read Zephaniah who is also a prophet at the time, he says that the priests have done violence to the Torah.

-Shaphan reads it twice. Hilkiah finds it and says to Shaphan, check this out. Shaphan reads it and then takes it to the king, and he reads it before the king. How big is it? If we go back to the Pentateuch, most of it's in third person but they are reporting on a book. The book of Deuteronomy specifically is talking about a book that they found later. The writer is telling us in Deuteronomy 27, write the words of the Torah of Moses on rocks. Plaster the rocks and write the whole thing. What was it that they wrote on plaster? Is it Genesis 1:1 through Deuteronomy 34:12? No, it's not. In Joshua 8, they actually write the Torah on rocks. They write a copy of the torah that Moses wrote and it says, all the words of the Torah, the blessings and the curses. It contains instructions, it contains blessings, and curses. Deuteronomy 27, talks about a ceremony in which the blessings and curses are read, they are all cursed Be's and no blessed Be's. This Torah that Moses wrote is written on stones.

-Deu 31: 10 And Moses commanded them, "At the end of every seven years, at the set time in the year of release, at the Feast of Booths, 11 when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

-What is it that they read? It's interesting that it could be a document that is smaller. Our Pentateuch tells us what's in that document. It reports on it third person, so where is it? The reformative action of Josiah are based on a form of Deuteronomy, that's clear. What did they do and where are they drawing that from? When the scroll is found, they don't consult Jeremiah. He has been a prophet since the thirteenth year of Josiah and it's now the eighteenth year. Jeremiah is not even mentioned. When the scroll is found, Josiah says to go get Huldah the prophetess. She says about this scroll that they found, it's bad and destruction is coming, but tell the king because he's repentant and doing such good things, he'll go to his grave in peace. After this great reform of Josiah's, he dies in a battle by an arrow from Necho.

-Josiah Dies in Battle

-2Chr 35: 20 After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Neco king of Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out to meet him. 21 But he sent envoys to him, saying, "What have we to do with each other, king of Judah? I am not coming against you this day, but against the house with which I am at war. And God has commanded me to hurry. Cease opposing God, who is with me, lest he destroy you." 22 Nevertheless, Josiah did not turn away from him, but disguised himself in order to fight with him. He did not listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, but came to fight in the plain of Megiddo. 23 And the archers shot King Josiah. And the king said

to his servants, "Take me away, for I am badly wounded." 24 So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried him in his second chariot and brought him to Jerusalem. And he died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. 25 Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah; and all the singing men and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these a rule in Israel; behold, they are written in the Laments.

-The Laments of Jeremiah

-We don't have the laments anymore from Jeremiah. We have no record in the biblical account that Jeremiah and Josiah ever met. We do know that when Josiah dies we get this reference that Jeremiah sang a lament and that the people sing it to this day.

-2Kin 23: 24 Moreover, Josiah put away the mediums and the necromancers and the household gods and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might establish the words of the law that were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD. 25 Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses, nor did any like him arise after him.

-When he found this scroll, there is no one like him ever. This text uses the language of the scroll that was found it would seem to underscore that he turned to God in accordance with the discovered scroll. Another indication that it was a form of a sefer that had language similar to what we see in Deuteronomy. Josiah is dead and the throne will pass to his son. Jeremiah continues to prophecy and his sermons put him in opposition to the religious authorities. The religious authorities don't like a message that goes against what makes them profitable. What makes them successful. What keeps them in authority. The message that Jeremiah preaches is that which he consumed when the words were found in the days of Josiah and those words do not agree with what others were preaching. The writer of Kings and Chronicles describe a great revival in the days of Josiah and a scroll that was found. The Chronicler puts this beautiful period of time in these words.

-2 Chr 34: 33 And Josiah took away all the abominations from all the territory that belonged to the people of Israel and made all who were present in Israel serve the LORD their God. All his days they did not turn away from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

-Jeremiah knows about the scroll that was discovered, it says that he devoured it when he discovered it. He's not distracted by any talk about revival. For Jeremiah, a pot tilted from the north, meaning that destruction is coming and he sees an almond branch blossoming which indicates it will be hastened. He said the Torah was rejected, mishandled, a lying pen had made it a lie. He says that the Torah that was discovered was placed before that generation and it was rejected. There was another group of prophets and priests at the time when Jeremiah was saying these things that said not to listen to Jeremiah, everything is fine. Everything is going well and we have the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD. We have the sacrifices. We have everything. We have a revival and there has never been a people like this generation that never turned away. That what the people think. Jeremiah looks around and says where?

-The people were at ease. The temple is restored. The sacrificial cult is back in operation. The scroll was found, and Jeremiah ate them. Perhaps his words in these sermons get him in trouble, that raise the hair on the back of the religious authorities of his day and ours.

He finds himself in opposition. I bet there were people that said, I can't listen to Jeremiah anymore. He's preaching something totally different. We are wise, we have the Torah with us.

-Jer 8: 8 "How can you say, 'We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us'? But behold, the lying pen of the scribes has made it into a lie.

-That's what they are saying, you see? They're saying we are wise. We have the Torah. No, you don't. You've rejected God's Torah. You've added to it. People in Jeremiah's day might say, he's stripping away all this stuff and claiming that this isn't from God. He's taking away and he's saying, No! I'm telling you to get back to what he actually said. The one that Moses wrote. And that is what I'm saying.

-Join me next week, we're going to continue to look at Jeremiah's words, no matter what and we are going to continue to search for the actual truth. We are not going to reject it.

Shabbat Shalom, Shavua Tov, see you next week.

THIS WEEK IN TORAH

JANUARY 21, 2023

This week's Torah Portion VaEra: "And I Appeared" (Exodus 6:2 – 9:35) God reassures Moses; God promises deliverance; The four expressions of redemption; Moses demurs; The mission and its bearers; Second demurrals; The genealogy of Moses and Aaron; Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh; The redemption begins; The first plague/blood; The second plague/frogs; The third plague/gnats; The fourth plague/fly; The fifth plague/livestock die; The sixth plague/boils; The seventh plague/hail. "Shavua Tov" and Have a Great Week!

"This Week in Torah" FB Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/571648826269105/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

-Blossoming Rose Israel Tours (2023): <https://blossomingrose.org/>

-Walking the Ancient Paths – March 17 - 28, 2023, See the Sights, Go Behind the Scenes; Dr. James D. Tabor. <https://blossomingrose.org/2023-walking-the-ancient-paths/>
-80th Annual UIWU Conference, Charlotte, NC: April 21-23, 2023, <https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/conference/>

-Tanakh Tours – Egypt / Jordan, October 31 – November 12, 2023, <https://www.tanakhtours.com/biblical-egypt-jordan-tour/> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwVIZvqHq-I>

-Tanakh Tours – Israel, November 12 – November 19, 2023, <https://www.tanakhtours.com/tanakh-tour-november-2021/>

-James Tabor YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/jamestaborvideos>

-James Tabor Blog: <https://jamestabor.com/>

-James Tabor Videos Channel Trailer: Posted November 4, 2022. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9GVG2m18JQ

-Ross K. Nichols YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9-ZXSjHKN6L0N4EbjhJ2fA>

-UIWU YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq31WAlio9zC1eXDzrEVzlg/featured>

