

# The Book of Comfort

## 30:1 to 31:40

595 BC during the eleven-year reign of Zedekiah

The messages leading up to this section are extremely negative. But the Book of Hope is totally different from everything before it and after it. **Jeremiah** responded to the call of **YHVH** with a fresh scroll that records words of good news. Now comes a very positive message. These verses are a light in the midst of darkness.

As we read through these chapters we find evidence of a layer of earlier poems that **the prophet** had addressed to the now long-dead **northern kingdom of Yisra'el**. Notice, for example, in **31:5**, the reference to **Samaria**, the capital of **the northern Kingdom**, and the repeated reference to **Ephraim**, the chief northern tribe, in **31:6, 9, 18** and **20**. At the time the poems were delivered, King Josiah hoped to bring about a reunion with the people in the northern territory, whom the Assyrian were loosening their grip on. **The priest from Anathoth** proclaimed words that both appealed for repentance and promised return from exile as previously seen in **3:12-14**.

Now **YHVH's prophet** sees that the old words addressed to **the north** have a new meaning: the people of **Y'hudah** must submit to Nebuchadnezzar, but someday, they, too, can be called upon to **return (shuwb)** to **the Land**. Consequently, **God's messenger** takes the old words directed to **the northern Kingdom** and interweaves them with fresh words to give them relevance to **the southern Kingdom**.<sup>264</sup> Words that would sustain **her** even during **her** time in **exile**.