

"Jeremiah: Bearer of Bad News" Jeremiah

In the midst of the greatest test of his life, Jeremiah focused on these key attributes of God: Lovingkindness = loyalty to a covenant, Compassion = tender care, Faithfulness = strong reliability.

Jeremiah the Prophet

- All prophets reminded God's people of the stipulations found in Deut. 28
- Obedience brings blessing
 - MORE: children- crops-herds-peace-food-prosperity
- Disobedience brings discipline
 - LESS: children-crops-herds-peace-food-freedom
 - Prophecy of cannibalism & exile

Jeremiah the Man

- Name: Yirme-yah ("Yah loosens/lifts")
- Ministry: 627-586bc (40+ years)
- Target: Judah
- Writer: Jeremiah (Baruch = secretary)

- Levite from Anathoth
 - 3 miles NE of Jerusalem
- Descendant of Abiathar
 - Sole survivor of King Saul's massacre of the priests at Nob
- Father = Hilkiyah (High Priest for Josiah?)
- Called in 627bc – around age 20

Jeremiah's Kings (Jeremiah: 627-586bc)

- Josiah: 640-609bc (great reform)
- Jehoahaz: 609bc (3 months...deported)
- Jehoiakim: 609-598bc (weak)...1st Exile
- Jehoiachin: 598-597bc (evil)...2nd Exile
- Zedekiah: 597-586bc...3rd Exile

Jeremiah's Empires (Jeremiah: 627-586bc)

- Assyrian: 884-609bc
- Babylonian: 609-536bc

Jeremiah's Babylonian Exiles (Jeremiah: 627-586bc)

- 605bc: 1st Exile: Daniel, etc.
- 597bc: 2nd Exile: Ezekiel, etc.
- 586bc: 3rd Exile: Fall of Jerusalem

Jeremiah's Ministry

- Probably experienced more opposition from enemies than any other prophet.
- Only prophet to extensively record his own feelings.
- A weeping prophet to a wayward people.

- What made him tick?
- Why was he so loyal despite circumstances?
- Why is he an unlikely hero?

The Book of Jeremiah

- Thematically arranged (not chronologically)
- Purposes: Repent/Submit/Judah Deserved Exile
- Chs. 1-10: Repent & Avoid Exile
- Chs. 11-29: Still No Repent = Exile (God's Will)

Jeremiah 25:8-11

Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Because you have not obeyed My words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' declares the LORD, 'and I will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them... This whole land will be a desolation and a horror and...will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.'

Jeremiah 29:10-11

For thus says the LORD, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'

- Chs. 30-33: Restoration & New Covenant
- Chs. 34-38: No Repentance/No Submission
- Chs. 39-45: Jerusalem Falls
- Chs. 46-52: Oracles Against the Nations

Jeremiah's Character

- The 40 years of Jeremiah's ministry were marked by a **stunning change**.
- Assyria was defeated by the Babylonians at Carchemish in 605bc.
- Judah was now in danger from Babylonia.

- Between 605-586bc Jeremiah implored the Jews to **submit to Babylon-** God's instrument to punish unfaithful Judah.
- Jeremiah was viewed as a traitor.

As his homeland deteriorated under the relentless Babylonian sieges & deportations- Jeremiah suffered deeply from the rejection by his people. A strong sense of despair continually plagued the prophet.

Jeremiah 4:19-22

My soul, my soul! I am in anguish! Oh, my heart! My heart is pounding in me; I cannot be silent, Because you have heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Disaster on disaster is proclaimed, for the whole land is devastated; Suddenly my tents are devastated, my curtains in an instant. How long must I see the standard and hear the sound of the trumpet? For my people are foolish...stupid...do evil...

Jeremiah 12:1, 6

Q: Righteous are You, O LORD, that I would plead my case with You; Indeed I would discuss matters of justice with You: Why has the way of the wicked prospered? Why are all those who deal in treachery at ease?

A: For even your brothers and the household of your father, even they have dealt treacherously with you, even they have cried aloud after you. Do not believe them, although they may say nice things to you.

Jeremiah 14:8-9

O Hope of Israel, its Savior in time of distress, Why are You like a stranger in the land or like a traveler who has pitched his tent for the night?

Why are You like a man dismayed, like a mighty man who cannot save? Yet You are in our midst, O LORD, and we are called by Your name; Do not forsake us!

Jeremiah 15:10

Woe to me, my mother, that you have borne me as a man of strife and a man of contention to all the land! I have not lent, nor have men lent money to me, yet everyone curses me.

Jeremiah 15:18

Why has my pain been perpetual and my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will You indeed be to me like a deceptive stream with water that is unreliable?

Jeremiah 20:7-8

O LORD, You have deceived me and I was deceived; You have overcome me and prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all day long; Everyone mocks me. For each time I speak, I cry aloud; I proclaim violence and destruction, because for me the word of the LORD has resulted in reproach and derision all day long.

His persecutions...

- Countless rejections by fellow Jews & Kings.
- Beaten & put in stocks.
- Threatened with death while King Jehoiakim kills other prophets of the Lord.
- Jehoiakim burns a scroll of Jeremiah's words.
- Imprisoned for desertion.
- Thrown into a muddy cistern to die.

His dramatics actions reveal his deep care...

- Ruined waistband = in Babylon & worthless
- Jugs with wine = drunk with coming defeat
- No marriage = families with kids will suffer
- No funerals = no mourning for Judah
- No parties = no festivity for Judah
- Buys jar then breaks it = Judah's destruction
- Good & rotten figs = captives & escapees
- Buys field during final siege = predicts return

Despite the despair and emotional turmoil experienced by Jeremiah - his faith remained steadfast.

Jeremiah 10:23-24

I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself, nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps. Correct me, O LORD, but with justice; Not with Your anger, or You will bring me to nothing.

Jeremiah 11:18-20

Moreover, the LORD made it known to me and I knew it; Then You showed me their deeds. But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter; And I did not know that they had devised plots against me... But, O LORD of hosts, who judges righteously, Who tries the feelings and the heart, let me see Your vengeance on them, for to You have I committed my cause.

Jeremiah 17:13-14

LORD, the hope of Israel, all who forsake You will be put to shame. Those who turn away on earth will be written down, because they have forsaken the fountain of living water, even the LORD. Heal me, O LORD, and I will be healed; Save me and I will be saved, for You are my praise.

Jeremiah 20:9-11a

But if I say, 'I will not remember Him or speak anymore in His name', then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire shut up in my bones; And I am weary of holding it in, and I cannot endure it. For I have heard the whispering of many, 'Terror on every side! Denounce him; yes, let us denounce him!' All my trusted friends, watching for my fall... But the LORD is with me like a dread champion...

The Final Siege of Jerusalem

- Lasted 18-19 months
 - Jerusalem surrounded & food cut off
 - Siege ramp built
 - Starvation & disease set in
 - Dung used for fuel
 - Corpses litter the city and temple
 - Cannibalism ensues
 - The city walls torn down & breached
 - Hand to hand combat
 - The temple & king's house burned
 - The houses of Jerusalem burned
 - King Zedekiah captured & blinded
 - Many captured – enslaved - exiled
 - Jeremiah spared by Nebuchadnezzar
 - "How lonely the city sits" (Lam. 1:1)
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- Jeremiah witnessed firsthand this terrible time in Judah's history.
 - His words in Lamentations 3:19-24 reveal the key to his understanding of God.

Lamentations 3:19-24

19 Remember my affliction and my wandering, the wormwood and bitterness.

20 Surely my soul remembers and is bowed down within me.

21 This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope.

22 The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail.

23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."

In the midst of the greatest test of his life-Jeremiah focused on these key attributes of God:

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- Compassion = tender care
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An Overview of Old Testament History

