

JEREMIAH – Its Inspiration

The book of Jeremiah abounds with statements of verbal inspiration. A few examples would be:

“To whom the word of the Lord came” (1:1)

“Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying” (1:4)

“But the Lord said unto me ... whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak” (1:7)

“And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth” (1:9). [Notice: “words” not “thoughts”!]

See also 1:11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 2:1, 4, 5, 9, 31; 3:6, 14; 4:1; 6:9; 7:1; 8:1; 9:3; 10:1, etc.

No other book of the Bible sets forth any stronger case for verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. We are made aware of God’s presence in every part of Jeremiah’s fifty-two chapters.

JEREMIAH – Its Scope

The book of Jeremiah is rich in its Messianic prophecies. It makes numerous allusions to plants, trees, and animals. It contains many great and well-loved preaching texts. It uses numerous vivid figures of speech. Jeremiah himself often quotes from Isaiah and Hosea and in turn is quoted by others in the Old Testament who follow him in time.

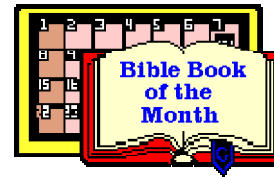
It seems preoccupied with mourning and funeral rites and has a number of expressions that are repeated frequently.

QUESTIONS:

1. Under what circumstances did Jeremiah begin preaching?
2. What title do we usually give to Jeremiah? Why?
3. What can you tell of his family?
4. Why do you think some people of Jesus’ day compared him with Jeremiah?
5. Describe the political scene of Jeremiah’s day.
6. What was a bright side to his prophecy?
7. Define and describe the New Covenant Jeremiah predicted?
8. How often does Jeremiah’s name appear in the book?
9. Describe his commission from God in Jeremiah 1:10.
10. Give at least one instance of Jeremiah being quoted in the NT.
11. What three types of material does the book contain?
12. What does the book have to say about inspiration?
13. What is your impression of Jeremiah?

– Rogersville Church of Christ - This printing: August 29, 2002

JEREMIAH – The Weeping Prophet



Lesson # 1

Text: Jeremiah 1:1-10

Collateral Reading: Jeremiah 1 - 20

Jeremiah 1:1-10

1 The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, 2 to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. 3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month. 4 Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: 5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”

6 Then said I: “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.” 7 But the Lord said to me: “Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’ For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak. 8 Do not be afraid of their faces, For I am with you to deliver you,” says the Lord. 9 Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me: “Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. 10 See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant.”

New King James Version

INTRODUCTION

Josiah, trained by the high priest Hilkiah, came to the throne at the age of eight about 640 B.C. This good king began a religious reformation in his 18th year but was killed in a battle with the Egyptians when only 31 years old (2 Kings 22, 23).

In the opening years of Josiah’s reformation Jeremiah joined with Zephaniah in attempting to arouse the conscience of the people.

Jeremiah is known to Bible students as “The Weeping Prophet” who laments Jerusalem’s doom. We can understand this when we read Jeremiah 4:19 and 9:1. What a grand blessing it would be if every elder and preacher in the Lord’s church had the kind of interest in God’s people he did!

JEREMIAH – The Man

We know more about Jeremiah than any other Old Testament prophet. He was from a priest's family who lived about three miles north of Jerusalem (1:1). He was called to his prophetic mission when just a young man (1:6,7). His preaching caused him to be quite unpopular and he suffered opposition and persecution from many sources.

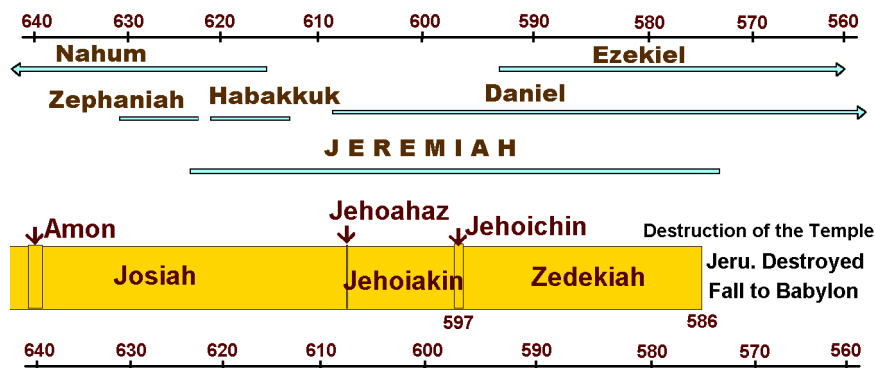
We come to see his sensitive heart as he reviews the terrible offences of the nation against God and laments her future. He uses strong vivid words in his preaching and is called by God to live alone, without a wife (16:2).

Perhaps for these and other similarities people in Jesus' day compared Him to the prophet Jeremiah (Matthew 16:14).

JEREMIAH – His Times

Jeremiah was God's prophet to Judah just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity of 586 B.C. The book of Jeremiah takes up about 60 years after the close of the book of Isaiah and deals with the last 40 years of Judah's decline and final fall.

Jeremiah's was a great tragic time. His ministry overlaps the reign of kings Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah; and the prophets Nahum, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk at the beginning of his work and Daniel and Ezekiel toward the end.



JEREMIAH – His Message

Jeremiah's message is a string of stern rebukes and tender pleadings to a backsliding nation. God gave Judah a final warning of impending judgment and when she refused to repent at Jeremiah's preaching that was it. The Babylonian exile was heaven's punishment of Judah for her sinfulness.

There is also a bright side to Jeremiah's prophecies. He held out the promise from God to return her from captivity. (Daniel later picked up on the fact that Jeremiah predicted it would be a seventy year captivity.) He prophesied that the Lord would one day make a new covenant with the house of Israel which referred to the Christian age. The new covenant will have aspects of: 1) individuality; 2) universality, and 3) remission of sins (Jeremiah 31:31-34; 32:40; 33:8).

JEREMIAH – His Commission

The opening verse bears Jeremiah's name (1:1). His name appears over 125 times in the book, and in 33 of the 52 chapters. No other writer's name appears so frequently in his respective book.

He was told to "Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem" (2:2). The "house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel" (2:4) were to hear the word of the Lord. While he had a message for other surrounding nations, it was particularly for Judah and Jerusalem he preached.

Jeremiah was to "root out, and pull down, and to destroy, to build and to plant" (1:10). His work was to remind God's people of their evils (2:13); tell them of their coming captivity (1:14-16); and assure them of eventual deliverance (Jeremiah 31).

JEREMIAH – New Testament Links

Jeremiah is an often quoted book in the New Testament. We can note only a few instances here:

1. Jer. 31:31-34 – Heb. 8:6-13; the old law to be replaced by a new one.
2. 31:15 – Mt. 2:16-18; Sorrow over the death of children slain by Herod.
3. Jeremiah 7:11 – Matthew 21:12-13; Misuse of God's house.
4. Jer. 23:5-6 – Mt. 28:18 & Acts 2:29-33; Jesus the King is promised.
5. Jer. 18:6 – Romans 9:21; The potter and the clay.

JEREMIAH – An Outline

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| 1. The Prophet's Call and Commission | – Jer. 1 |
| 2. Prophecies to Jerusalem & Judah | – Jer. 2 - 35 |
| 3. Events in the Life of Jeremiah | – Jer. 36 - 45 |
| 4. Prophecies to Foreign Nations | – Jer. 46 - 51 |
| 5. Historical Summary | – Jer. 52 |

The book is made up of biography, history, and prophecy, but it's not arranged in any chronological order. Rather, it is grouped according to subject matter and the purpose of the author.