



Walking Thru The Bible

JEREMIAH

Introduction

Josiah, trained by the high priest Hilkiah, came to the throne at the age of eight about 640 BC. 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 OT 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 BC. 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 on 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 (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. Jeremiah 31:31-34 -- Hebrews 8:6-13
The old law to be replaced by a new one.

2. Jeremiah 31:15 -- Matthew 2:16-18
Sorrow over the death of the children slain by Herod.
3. Jer. 7:11 -- Matthew 21:12-13; Misuse of God's house.
4. Jer. 23:5-6 -- Matthew 28:18 and Acts 2:29-33
Jesus the King is promised.
5. Jeremiah 18:6 -- Romans 9:21; The potter and the clay.

Jeremiah -- An Outline

I.	The Prophet's Call and commission --	Jer. 1
II.	Prophecies to Jerusalem and Judah --	Jer. 2 - 35
III.	Events in the Life of Jeremiah --	Jer. 36 - 45
IV.	Prophecies to Foreign Nations --	Jer. 46 - 51
V.	Historical Appendix --	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.

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.

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

Jeremiah -- Its Inspiration

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

"Then the word of the Lord came to 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, 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.

When You're Ready To Quit **Jeremiah 9:2**

Introduction:

1. Life was not easy for Jeremiah.
2. Alienated from his friends, afflicted by his enemies.
3. "**Oh,**" he said, "***that I had in the desert a wayfarer's lodging place, that I might leave my people and go away from them!***" Jeremiah 9:2
4. How often do we likewise become discouraged?
5. **Reasons we can't settle for a wayfarer's lodging place.**

I. Because of the Challenge Within

1. Jeremiah was appointed to a task and so are we.
2. "*But if I say, 'I will not remember Him or speak any more 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"* (Jeremiah 20:9) NASV.
3. We have a great mission -- Mark 16:15.

II. Because of the Need Without

1. Jeremiah's heart was burdened by the spiritual condition of those around him.
2. The need of this world today is great! A great challenge in Russia!
3. Jesus described the compelling impetus with the story of the stork in Luke 15 of the shepherd and his sheep.

III. Because We Have the Answer for the Need

1. We cannot settle for a wayfarer's resting place because we have the answer for the need of our world.
2. God's Word can change the worse of men.
3. It can conquer nations.

Conclusion:

1. God's word has the answers we need today.