

Jeremiah Part 1 “Jeremiah was Committed and Unwavering!” (12:24)

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Introduction to the Lesson: Follow along with us as we study the Major Prophets! This video teaches the narrative of the prophet Jeremiah, as told by his sister, Hannah, a fictional character. Listen along as she tells of Jeremiah's challenges and triumphs... and how one man held fast to Yahweh and spoke for him during the most difficult of times.

Intro to the Video: As you watch the video, you may wish to just listen, or follow along with the note sheet. We will stop for discussion in the middle of the video, and also discuss the video at the end. Be sure to record any questions you have as you watch. Also, be ready to share something new you learned or something that stood out to you in the video.

Play Video: (12:24) and Jeremiah movie clip (on website)

Questions: First Half

1. What did Jeremiah do, even in the midst of a declining spiritual culture?
2. What does Jeremiah 6:16 mean for us today?
3. What was Jeremiah's main message?
4. Was the culture similar to the one we are living in today? Why or why not?
5. Why do you think Jeremiah was constantly put in prison, but not Baruch?
6. How can we determine who is a real prophet of God, and who is a false one?

Second half

1. How do we know from the text that Jeremiah was unwavering in his faith, even though he asked God questions?
2. What was the one way out of total destruction that God made for the remaining people of Judah? What is the one way out of total destruction that God has made for us? How are these two ways similar? How are they different?
3. What did the remnant of Yahweh living in Jerusalem do in the last days of the nation to not lose heart? What did the remnant of Yahweh living in Babylon do? What can we do?
4. Is our situation in America right now similar to theirs? Why or why not?
5. How does the illustration of the good and bad figs help explain why some of the Jews are treated so poorly in places around the world?
6. What do you think the believers in exile thought of Jeremiah's letter?
7. What was it that made the people of Judah so prideful that they would not believe they could ever be attacked and overtaken? What is it about America?

Closure and Final Prayer: Spend time praying that we will also be committed and unwavering, like Jeremiah, through these difficult times!

Scriptures: Jeremiah 1-29, 2 Chronicles 34, 35, 2 Kings 22-24, Jeremiah 7:28. 29:11,

Notes: Jeremiah Part 1

Introduction and History:

- Jeremiah means “The Lord Exalts”.
- Hilkiah, Jeremiah’s father, found the lost Book of the Law in the temple!!

Jeremiah’s Calling:

- Jeremiah was called by the Lord to be His prophet, 629 BC
- His family was living at that time in the priest city of Anathoth
- God revealed to him that he had been chosen, even from inside his mother’s womb, to be His prophet!
- God reassured him that indeed he would speak for Him, because he was putting HIS words in Jeremiah’s mouth, and that he would set him over the nations.

Jeremiah’s Early Messages

- God began to speak to Jeremiah, giving him prophecies for Judah and Jerusalem.
- His main message then, was, “Return to Me...” as God was calling out for his people to come home to him.
- While King Josiah was doing all he could to turn the nation back to God, the people still had “a defiant and rebellious heart. They had revolted and departed.” (5:23)
- Even though Israel, the Northern Kingdom, had been “put away” or divorced from Yahweh, the people of Judah did not learn.
- Babylon’s army was coming to Judah! He was not the first prophet to warn of this coming destruction. Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, and others had also prophesied this.
- The Chaldeans (Babylonians) would possess their homes and lands, destroy their cities and eat up their harvest. Then, the survivors would be taken into captivity to different parts of the Babylonian empire.
- The inhabitants of Jerusalem would be “gleaned” as a vine. 6:9. The old, the young, the husband and wife...all would be taken.
- Jeremiah pleaded with the people, **“Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it. Then you will find rest for your souls. 6:16** But they were not willing. This was a nation that would not obey the voice of the Lord their God, nor receive correction. (7:2)

Opposition to Jeremiah

- By now, the so-called “prophets” and “priests” had started a propaganda campaign against the teachings of Jeremiah.
- The prophets were prophesying falsely and the priests were ruling by their own power (5:31).
- Yet, Jeremiah preached on! “Amend your ways and your doings and I will cause you to dwell in this place!”
- He cut off his hair and cast it away, and took up a lamentation for Judah on a bare mountain top..
- A plot was formed by the men of Anathoth to kill Jeremiah! (12:6).
- “Why does the way of the wicked prosper?” Jeremiah asks God.
- Answer: ”If you have fought for me this far, with the footmen, and they have worn you out, how will you contend with the battle horses when they arrive?” In other words, things are going to get worse before they get better!

Prophetic Acts

- Bury a linen sash in the Euphrates river, and dig it up again.
- Go to the potter’s house and have him turn a marred vessel into a brand new one.
- Go to the elders of the people with a flask and break it in front of the people.
- All of these things were pointing to the idea that the end was near, and God was not changing his mind.
- Jeremiah became less and less tolerated by the people, most of whom did not follow Yahweh.
- He was under derision daily and constantly mocked.(20:7). He was beaten and put in the stocks. (20:2) But he could not be persuaded. The Lord’s words were in his heart like a burning fire. (20:9)
- Although Jeremiah was often thrown into prison for speaking Yahweh’s words, God sent him a helper. His friend and scribe, Baruch.

Historical Background (Second Half)

- Jeremiah was a prophet during the death throes of Judah, and he prophesied under five kings. **Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoikim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.**
- **Josiah**, mentioned earlier, was such a wonderful king!
- His son, **Jehoahaz**, was not. He was taken captive to Egypt after reigning just three months, and the country was placed under Egyptian control.
- After that, Nebuchadnezzar, a Chaldean who was king of Babylon, came up against Judah three times.

- The first time, under wicked **King Jehoiakim**, another of Josiah's sons, they were attacked and now placed under tribute to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar took captive 3320 of the finest men of Judah, including a strong lover of Yahweh from the royal family, Daniel, and many of the other princes. They were a vassal state, and no longer our own country.
- Three years later, **King Jehoiakim** decided to rebel against Babylon and refused to pay the tribute. Jeremiah had warned him not to! He reminded the king, that if he did not submit to Chaldean rule, God would send the rest of the people of Judah out of the land. (Jer 27:5)
- So, the Lord brought against them raiding bands of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites
- Next, **Jehoichin**, his son, ruled for three months. During his short reign, King Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem for the second time and took the 18 year old king with him, along with another 10,000 captives. This time, he took the entire royal family, the mighty men of war, merchants and craftsmen, as well as many of the articles from the house of the Lord! Ezekiel, was also taken with this group. Only the poor of the land were left. (2 Chron 34-35, 2 Kings 22-24)
- King Nebuchadnezzar, placed **Zedekiah**, another of King Josiah's sons, and full brother of Jehoiakim, as king in Judah. **Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. He who remains in the city will die... but he who goes out shall live, and his life shall be his prize. I will give this city to the king of Babylon and he shall burn it with fire.** God had made only one way out for his people, and the rest would perish. (21:5-10)

The Remnant

- Remaining believers, living in Jerusalem were meeting underground with the remnant of the Yahweh followers.
- Zephaniah was also there, along with Habakkuk
- How would they survive? How would they be able to surrender?
- God showed Jeremiah two baskets of figs. (prophetic vision)
- How long would they be captive in Babylon?
- The answer God gave through Jeremiah (25:11) would be 70 years!
- So Jeremiah sent off a letter to the captives in Babylon, the true believers of Yahweh, dictated from Yahweh himself, to tell them the news.
- God told them, "Settle in! Plant gardens, get married and have families. I will keep the city where you live now in peace. Beware of the false prophets, who are still among you! You will be there 70 years. But after that time, I will have you return home. **"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord. Thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."** 29:11 (chapter 29).

Timeline for the Fall of Judah and Jerusalem, Jeremiah/Ezekiel

639-609 BC King Josiah reigns in Judah

629 BC Jeremiah Called

612 BC Fall of Ninevah (Assyrian capital)

605 BC Fall of Assyrians to Babylon

609 BC * King Jehoahaz reigns (3 months) Taken to Egypt

609-597 BC *King Jehoiakim reigns

605 BC Babylon's First attack, **Daniel** Taken with Exiles to Babylon

597 BC **King Jehochin reigns (3 months) 2nd Attack **Ezekiel** and king taken with Exiles to Babylon

597- 586 BC *King Zedekiah reigns (11 years)

592 BC Ezekiel Called in Babylon to be a prophet, First Vision

588 BC Third Siege of Jerusalem

586 BC Jerusalem falls to Babylon, Jerusalem Destroyed

586 BC Jeremiah released, Gedaliah appointed governor

572 BC Ezekiel's final vision of the Temple

539 BC Cyrus of Persia takes Babylon

*Son of Josiah **Grandson of Josiah