
Jeremiah

The book of **Jeremiah** is the second of five “Major Prophets” (referring to the book’s length, not importance). The book gets its name from its author. The book is not chronological. It is organized topically or morally, mixing prophecies made during the reigns of various kings.

Book Background and History

Jeremiah covers the reigns of the last five kings of Judah: Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. This was a time when things were rushing toward final catastrophe. The kings in Judah were generally under Babylonian control but often turned to Egypt for help. This angered the Babylonian kings who then laid waste to Judah and took many captives. There was considerable fighting within Judah as some wanted to fight while others preferred to submit to the Babylonians.

About the Author

Jeremiah was from the village of Anathoth. He was the son of a priest. God called Jeremiah to be a prophet (**Jer 1:4-5**). Jeremiah began by asking God to excuse him from the responsibility (**Jer 1:6-9**), then accepted the call (**Jer 2:2**).

Jeremiah portrayed great empathy for God’s feelings as well as great empathy for the people. At the hands of the people he loved, he suffered mocking, plots against his life, and physical punishment. Of all the prophets, he is the one who never saw any reform of those to whom he ministered. Never did he get a single grateful response.

Some people call Jeremiah “the weeping prophet” (**Jer 9:1, 13:17, 14:17**). He

continually mourned over Judah’s sin against God, their rebellion against God’s Word, and the impending judgment. Jeremiah built his whole ministry around his sincere desire to help God’s people return to the Lord.

Key Verses

Jer 30:15 Why do you cry about your affliction? Your sorrow is incurable. Because of the multitude of your iniquities, Because your sins have increased, I have done these things to you.

Jer 30:17 For I will restore health to you And heal you of your wounds,' says the LORD, 'Because they called you an outcast saying: "This is Zion; No one seeks her."'

Book Highlights

<i>pictures of Christ</i>	<i>lessons from objects</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• fountain of living waters, 2:13• Great Physician, 8:22• Good Shepherd, 23:4, 31:10• Righteous Branch, 23:5• Lord our Righteousness, 23:6• Redeemer, 50:34	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• almond rod, 1:11-12• boiling pot, 1:13-14• good for nothing girdle, 13:1-11• full bottle, 13:12-14• potter’s vessel, 18:1-6• broken bottle, 19:1-13• hidden stones, 43:9-13

Central Message: I will punish. I will restore.

Promise of New Covenant

Jeremiah 31:31-34 records God's promise to the divided Jewish kingdoms of Israel and Judah to replace the Old Covenant/Testament with the New Covenant/Testament (**Heb 8:6-13**).

God allowed the Gentiles (non-Jewish people) to take part in this covenant (**Eph 2:11-22**) and planned to use the Gentiles to help the Jews return to Him (**Rom 11:11-15**).

Personal Reflection and Application

Jeremiah was overwhelmed by the knowledge of the people's rejection of God and God's impending judgment (**Jer 15:17-18**). At times, Jeremiah wanted to quit.

However he remained faithful to God's calling as His messenger (**Jer 20:7-13**). Where do you gain strength when you feel like quitting?

Small Group Conversation Guide

One of the most difficult things to do is to feel empathy for those who treat us poorly. Read **Jeremiah 9:1**, **13:17**, and **14:17**. Discuss the remarkable way that Jeremiah continued to plead for those who mocked and abused him.

What would it take for you to have the strength and love to pray for people like the ones Jeremiah faced?

Leadership Principles from Jeremiah

Images that Communicate

Effective leaders use memorable images when they communicate. Notice the images that Jeremiah uses in **Jeremiah 2:4-19**. Based on what Jeremiah did, here are five tips to communicate a message:

1. Begin by grabbing their attention. Jeremiah didn't waste time. He had a strong opening.

2. Use simple language. Jeremiah didn't try to impress them with eloquent language.
3. Stick to one theme. Though Jeremiah used several images, they all related to one theme.
4. Use word pictures. Jeremiah used images they could see in their minds.
5. End with an appeal. Jeremiah appealed to their minds and hearts.

Something to Find in Each Chapter

As you read through the book, it may help to have something to find in each chapter.
Try these:

01. What God said to Jeremiah about his personal fears	02. What two evils Israel was committing against God
03. How Judah was committing spiritual adultery on God	04. How God called Judah to "return" to avoid an invasion
05. How Judah rebelled against God's warnings	06. How false prophets shared false messages of "peace"
07. How Judah was worshipping both God and idols	08. What God said about Judah's claims to have wisdom
09. How Jeremiah wished he could mourn Judah's rebellion	10. How God contrasted Himself with man-made gods
11. How Israel and Judah broke their covenant with God	12. How Jeremiah questioned why the wicked prospered
13. What the ruined linen belt foretold of Judah's future	14. What was to happen to the false prophets of peace
15. What Jeremiah did with the words of God	16. Why God told Jeremiah not to marry or have children
17. Who God said would be cursed and who'd be blessed	18. What was illustrated by the potter remaking the pot
19. What was illustrated by Jeremiah breaking the pot	20. Why Jeremiah could not stop sharing God's Word
21. What God told King Zedekiah about the coming battle	22. How good King Josiah raised evil successors
23. Which of Israel's leadership roles had become evil	24. What the good and bad figs represented to Judah
25. How many years God said Judah would be in exile	26. Why the leaders wanted to put Jeremiah to death
27. Why Jeremiah sent yokes to Judah and other nations	28. What God did after Hananiah broke Jeremiah's yoke
29. How God assured those in captivity of a better future	30. How God promised to bring back Israel from exile
31. How God promised to offer His people a new covenant	32. Why God told Jeremiah to buy property in the land

33. How God promised to raise up the "Branch" (Messiah)	34. What the people resumed doing in defiance of God
35. How the Rechabites were a model of obedience to all	36. What King Johoiakim did with Jeremiah's prophecy
37. Who Judah trusted to protect them from Babylon	38. Why Judah's leaders wanted Jeremiah put to death
39. What happened to Jeremiah after Jerusalem fell	40. Whether Jeremiah decided to stay or go to Babylon
41. Why the Jews who remained in the land fled to Egypt	42. Why the Jewish remnant began fleeing to Egypt
43. What burying the stones in the Egyptian city pictured	44. How Jews in Egypt did not stop worshipping false gods
45. What God promised to Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe	46. How God foretold that Babylon would invade Egypt
47. How God foretold that Babylon would invade Philistia	48. Why God allowed the Moabites to be defeated
49. How God was systematically judging enemy nations	50. Why God said the mighty Babylonian empire would fall
51. What sinking the book in the Euphrates River pictured	52. What story gave hope at the end of Jeremiah's book