

Jeremiah

Lesson 1: The Prophetic Calling of Jeremiah

Memory Verse **Hand out Scriptures to read**

Jeremiah 1:5 (NKJV) *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.*

Jeremiah means = Exaltation of the Lord or Jehovah Exalts!

In the Latin Vulgate version is, "the Prophecy of Jeremiah"; in the Syriac and Arabic versions, "the Prophecy of the Prophet Jeremiah" Jeremiah was born about 643 b.c. He began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign; or 627 BC. The duration of his prophesying was upwards forty years. This period spanned the reigns of five kings of Judah: Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.

His life overlaps with Daniel and Ezekiel.

Few doubt he is the author except for some question the last chapter. Jeremiah is referred to as a prophet in both the old and New Testament. He saw the destruction of Jerusalem and the holy Temple, after he had incessantly warned his people to mend their ways before it was too late. And when the catastrophe finally overwhelmed his people, he was the one who bitterly lamented Israel's fate in the Book of Lamentations. Jeremiah was probably one of the few people took to the grave the secret of where the ark of the covenant was hidden.

Jeremiah witnessed the fall of the Assyrian Empire and the death of King Josiah. The destruction of the Northern Kingdom by the Assyrians was still fresh in the memory of the people of Judah during his time.

Jeremiah's lot in life wasn't all a happy one in many ways. His calling brought him suffering, woe, rejection, even imprisonment. Worse still was the fact that so many of these troubles came from the very ones whom he was seeking to help, seeking to point in the right direction. Thus, in his own way, Jeremiah prefigured what Jesus Himself would face hundreds of years later in the same land. The last prophecy of Jeremiah is given from Egypt foretelling a judgment upon Egypt.

We don't know much about his death.

The Prophets

Isaiah 1:19–20 (NKJV) *If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land; But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword"; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.*

***Ezekiel 18:23** (NKJV) *Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord God, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live? .*

Jeremiah 7:5–7 (NKJV) *"For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, ⁶if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, ⁷then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever.*

Matthew 3:7–11 (NKJV) *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, ⁹and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. ¹⁰And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*

Jeremiah 11:2–6 (NKJV) *"Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; ³and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: "Cursed is the man who does not obey the words of this covenant ⁴which I commanded your fathers in the day I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, 'Obey My voice, and do according to all that I command you; so shall you be My people, and I will be your God,' ⁵that I may establish the oath which I have sworn to your fathers, to give them 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' as it is this day." ' " And I answered and said, "So be it, Lord." ⁶Then the Lord said to me, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying: 'Hear the words of this covenant and do them.*

Jeremiah's Family Background

***Jeremiah 1:1** (ESV) *The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin,*

Joshua 21:17–19 (ESV) *then out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its pasturelands, Geba with its pasturelands, ¹⁸Anathoth with its pasturelands, and Almon with its pasturelands—four cities. ¹⁹The cities of the descendants of Aaron, the priests, were in all thirteen cities with their pasturelands.*

1 Kings 1:25 (ESV) *For he has gone down this day and has sacrificed oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons, the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest. And behold, they are eating and drinking before him, and saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!'*

1 Kings 2:26 (NKJV) *And to Abiathar the priest the king [Solomon] said, "Go to Anathoth, to your own fields, for you are deserving of death; but I will not put you to death at this time, because you carried the ark of the Lord God before my father David, and because you were afflicted every time my father was afflicted."*

"A member of the Levitical priesthood, Jeremiah had been trained from childhood for holy service. In those happy years of preparation he little realized that he had been ordained from birth to be 'a prophet unto the nations;' and when the divine call came, he was overwhelmed with a sense of his unworthiness. 'Ah, Lord God!' he exclaimed, 'behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.' Jeremiah 1:5, 6."— P&K, p. 407.

The Prophetic Calling of Jeremiah

Jeremiah 1:1–5 (NKJV) *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."*

***Luke 1:15** (NKJV) *For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.*

Isaiah 44:1–2 (ESV) *"But now hear, O Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen! Thus says the Lord who made you, who formed you from the womb and will help you: Fear not, O Jacob my servant, Jeshurun whom I have chosen.*

Exodus 33:12 (ESV) *Moses said to the Lord, "See, you say to me, 'Bring up this people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.'*

Can we think of others that were called to be prophets and that rejected their calling. King Saul, Balaam,

"The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. Where there is no vision, the people perish, Prov. 29:18. Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence in God's remnant people in the true testimony." - Maranatha, chapter 150

Reluctant Prophets

Jeremiah 1:6 (NKJV) *Then said I: "Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth."*

Exodus 4:10–11 (ESV) *But Moses said to the Lord, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue." ¹¹ Then the Lord said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?"*

***Isaiah 6:5** (NKJV) ⁵ *So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts."*

Luke 5:8 (NKJV) *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"*

Exodus 6:12 (NKJV) *And Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, "The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?"*

Matthew 28:20 *behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

The Almond Branch

Jeremiah 1:11–19 (NKJV) ¹¹ *Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" And I said, "I see a branch of an almond tree." ¹² Then the Lord said to me, "You have seen well, for I am ready to perform My word." ...Do not be dismayed before their faces, Lest I dismay you before them. ¹⁸ For behold, I have made you this day **A fortified city and an iron pillar, And bronze walls** against the whole land— Against the kings of Judah, Against its princes, Against its priests, And against the people of the land. ¹⁹*

Ezekiel 2:6–7 (NKJV) *"And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns are with you and you dwell among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, though they are a rebellious house. ⁷ You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious.*

John the Baptist Paul Jesus spoke boldly and fearlessly before Kings.

Bold Prophets

John 7:26 *But, lo, he speaketh **boldly**, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?*

Acts 4:13 *Now when they saw the **boldness** of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.*

Prov 28:1 *The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.*

Acts 4:29 *And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,*

***Acts 4:31** *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God **with boldness**.*

Heb 4:16 *Let us therefore come **boldly** unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

We can come boldly to the throne asking for Mercy.

Eph 6:18 *praying always with **all prayer** and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints; and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth **boldly** to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak **boldly**, as I ought to speak.*