

OUTLINE GUIDE

BIBLE

STUDY

JEREMIAH

ATLANTA BELVEDERE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

SAT

3PM



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Jeremiah

Introduction

The book is rich in information about the life, the personality, the times, and the message of Jeremiah. Jeremiah received one of the highest assignments of any Old Testament prophets. He is called by God to lead a people who would not follow his leadership. Imagine carrying out your God-given call for forty years without seeing much positive results.

Jeremiah was born in the town of Anathoth of Benjamin about two miles northeast of Jerusalem to a family of exiled priests (1 Kings 2:26-27). While his actual birthdate is not known it is believed that he was born during the closing years of the reign of King Manasseh (687-642).

Jeremiah's call to the prophetic ministry came during the reign of Josiah (640-609), about the year 627 (Jeremiah 1:20). He served as prophet under kings Josiah, Jehoahaz (609), Jehoiakim (609-598), Jehoiachin (598-597), and Zedekiah (597-587).

He was taken forcibly to Babylon in 587 – where he continued to prophesy for an unknown amount of time, until his death.

God directed Jeremiah to deliver a message of critical importance to His people—a message of repentance, a call to raise the standard they had abandoned and recapture their values and heritage. He endeavored to supply direction for the nation at a time when it was striving to adjust to the pressure of foreign military powers. It was a time when King Manasseh found it impossible to resist Assyria. As king, he paid taxes, and recognized the Assyrian gods that polluted Judah's religion and national life.

Under the rulership of King Josiah, Judah had a measure of freedom from Assyria, and he launched a sweeping reform aimed at achieving total freedom and independence from Assyria politically and religiously, but the reforms were only superficial. The reform was brought about by the discovery of the Book of the Law (2 Kings 22). However the reforms were inadequate. After Josiah's death in 609 at the hands of the Egyptian king Neco II, Jeremiah found himself in a bitter conflict with evil Jehoiakim who was made king by Neco II against the wishes of the Judean people.



Within a short time Jehoiakim transferred his allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar. His allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar was short lived because he relied on Egypt to aid him in his rebellion against Babylon. It is believed that he was assassinated and Jehoiachin was crowned king. He reigned three months and was carried off to Babylon and Zedekiah was installed as vassal king (597).

As a vassal king, Zedekiah (597-587) began plotting rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar and in 589 he broke the treaty with him and launched open rebellion. The Babylonian army came and destroyed the fortified cities of Judah. Zedekiah was blinded and carried away in chains to Babylon along with the nobles and population and Judah came to an end.

Jeremiah was considered a traitor because he saw Nebuchadnezzar's rule over Judah as God's punishment for their sins, a punishment from which they should not seek to escape. He predicted destruction of the nation as a consequence of their rebellion, and the promises of false prophets. As a result, Jeremiah endured untold suffering. With all of this, Jeremiah's heart did not grow cold. He continued to invest in the cause to which he was called.

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Message and Theme

The message of Jeremiah illuminates the distant as well as near horizon of the people of God. False prophets proclaimed peace for a rebellious nation as if the God of Israel was indifferent to their unfaithfulness. However, the same God who authorized Jeremiah to pronounce judgment was the same God who authorized him to announce that His judgment would have an end—70 years. Forgiveness and cleansing would come—a new day in which all the old expectations would be fulfilled in a manner transcending all of God's mercies of old.



The theme is God is the ultimate, Creator of all that exists (10:12-16; 51:15-19), all powerful (32:27; 47:15; 51:57), everywhere present

(23:24), God is Lord not only of Judah but of all the nations (5:15; 18:7-10; 25:17-28; chapters 46-51).

God calls Jeremiah to announce judgment and the destruction of Judah, but His judgment was not to be the last word. Beyond judgment would come restoration and renewal. The nation that crushed them would be crushed and He would write His law in their hearts. The house of David would rule then in righteousness and faithful priests would serve. God's commitment to Israel's redemption was as unailing as the secure order of creation.

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Literary Feature

Jeremiah has the most words, it is written in prose, and most sections are predominately poetic in form. It contains an abundance of



memorable passages. (like 2:13, 26-28; 7:4, 11, 34; 8:20, 22; 9:23-24; 10:6-7, 10, 12-13; 13:23; 15:20; 17:5-9; 20:13; 29:13; 30:7, 22; 31:3, 15, 29-30, 31-34;

33:33; 51:10)

Jeremiah, like Ezekiel, uses symbolism to highlight his message—a ruined and useless belt (13:1-11), a smashed clay jar (19:1-12), a yoke of straps and crossbars (Ch. 27), large stones in a brick pavement

(43:8-13); the Lord's command to marry and raise children (16:1-4), to buy a field in his hometown Anathoth (32:6-15).

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Outline

- I. The Call of the Prophet (ch. 1)

- II. Warnings and exhortations to Judah (chs. 2-35)
 - a. Earnest Discourse (2-6)
 - b. Temple Message (7-10)
 - c. Covenant Conspiracy (11-18)
 - d. Message Concerning the Drought (14-15)
 - e. Disaster and Comfort (16:1-17:18)
 - f. Command to Keep the Sabbath (17:19-27)
 - g. Lessons from the Potter (18-20)
 - h. Condemnation of Kings, Prophet, and People (21-24)
 - i. Foretelling the Babylonian Exile (25-29)
 - j. Promise of Restoration (30-33)
 - k. Historical Appendix (34-35)

- III. Suffering and Persecution of the Prophet (chs. 36-38)
 - a. Burning Jeremiah's Scroll (36)
 - b. Imprisoning Jeremiah (37-38)

