



JEREMIAH

REAL MAN. REAL PROPHET.

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Resisting the Tide.

When God's Truth is most needed is the time when it is most unappreciated and scorned. Yet such is the time to live it and proclaim it...unashamed.

BEING FAITHFUL IN A TIME OF FAITHLESSNESS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Stepping into Jeremiah's sandals...

JEREMIAH was born into a family of priests with his father, Hilkiah, being among them. He was taught the ways of the Law and raised to be a teacher of the Law in a community named Anathoth (1:1). Whether or not he actually served as a priest himself is unknown, but this could be within the realm of possibility.¹ Expositor Michael Hunter concludes that his family "must have been" part of the Levitical tribe, but this appears somewhat debatable.²

Jeremiah clearly had a strong Judeo-religious upbringing and was well aware of the surrounding influences of culture, language, and the ever-pervasive idolatry of the era. The ungodly King Manasseh ruled over Judah during the very early years of Jeremiah's life and the sentiment of his reign could undoubtedly be felt for sometime after his death (2 Kings 21:1-9). Within this fragmented society, Jeremiah was commissioned to call Judah to repentance and warn them of

impending judgment from God.³

SHORT-LIVED CHANGE

The young, yet godly and righteous King Josiah took the throne just one and a half years before Jeremiah was called as a prophet. Some eighteen years later, wide-sweeping reforms took place across Judah under Josiah's rule (2 Kgs. 22:3-23:25), resulting in a period of great spiritual renewal and awakening. But unfortunately this era did not last long (2 Chron. 35:20-24).

With the death of King Josiah began a long slide of spiritual decline and increasing wickedness. The good King Josiah was not as good of a parent as he was a king. His sons, who took the throne one by one, led the nation of Judah into a faster and faster downward spiral, and consistently ignored the prophets that God repeatedly sent.

GOD'S MESSENGER

Jeremiah was, without argument, the foremost prophet to Judah at this time.

He was without parallel in authority, influence, and endurance.⁴ Yet for all of this, he was rarely listened to, and ultimately his words were never heeded during his lifetime. For these reasons, Jeremiah has been and will always be known as the prophet who wept over his people, and with deep compassion and unrelenting devotion continued to proclaim the truth of God to an oftentimes deaf ear.

Pastor H.A. Ironside commented on the "realness" of Jeremiah this way:

"The account of Jeremiah's call to the prophetic office is very instructive and deeply interesting. The thoughtful reader feels at once how intensely human was the man, how condescendingly gracious the Lord."⁵

CENTRAL THEME OF JEREMIAH'S WRITINGS:

Although God will bring just judgment on the faithless disobedient, He will preserve a faithful remnant because He is a faithful God.

PROPS PREACH!

Ten memorable object lessons are found throughout God's word *to* and *through* the prophet Jeremiah, in order to powerfully drive home the message. Check these out:

1. Almond Tree Branch (1:11-12)
2. Boiling Pot (1:13)
3. Linen Belt (13:1-11)
4. The Potter and the Clay (18:1-17)
5. Broken Clay Jars (19:1-12)
6. Baskets of Figs (24:1-10)
7. The Yoke (27:2-11)
8. Purchased Field (32:6-25)
9. Large Stones (42:8-13)
10. Scroll Sunk in River (51:59-64)

DID YOU KNOW?

...the book of Jeremiah contains more autobiographical information than any other prophetic book? It is an intensely honest look at the man, Jeremiah.⁶

...Jeremiah questioned his ability as a prophet? (cf. Jer. 1:6)

...Jeremiah doubted the reason for his life and calling? (cf. Jer. 20:14-18)

...Jeremiah never married and was betrayed by his family? (Jer. 8:6; 16:1-2)

...Jeremiah served as God's prophet in Jerusalem over the span of 4 different kings and one governor? His life spanned the reign of 5 different kings in Jerusalem!

...Jeremiah prophesied the word of the Lord for more than 40 years but never saw the nation sincerely return to the one true God?

...Jeremiah eventually died in Egypt with a number of the remnant, in exile from the beloved Promised Land?

...Jeremiah remained faithful and hopeful in God despite being opposed, persecuted, abandoned, imprisoned, and eventually exiled? (Not to mention being thrown in a deep, old cistern).

WHAT JEREMIAH MIGHT SAY TODAY...

I hear that our God wrote something much later on in His book (in which God's words to me are contained)...that he told a young pastor named Timothy something like this, "Don't give up and don't give them what they want...give them what they need!" He, through another messenger named Paul, wrote, "The time has come when they will not endure sound doctrine." (2 Tim. 4:1-5)

I know this was always the case in the land of my beloved people, in the city of Jerusalem. They did not want to hear what God said. They did not want to know Him or understand Him. But instead they wanted to know and understand all evil, wickedness, and sinfulness. They even took pride in their knowledge of evil.

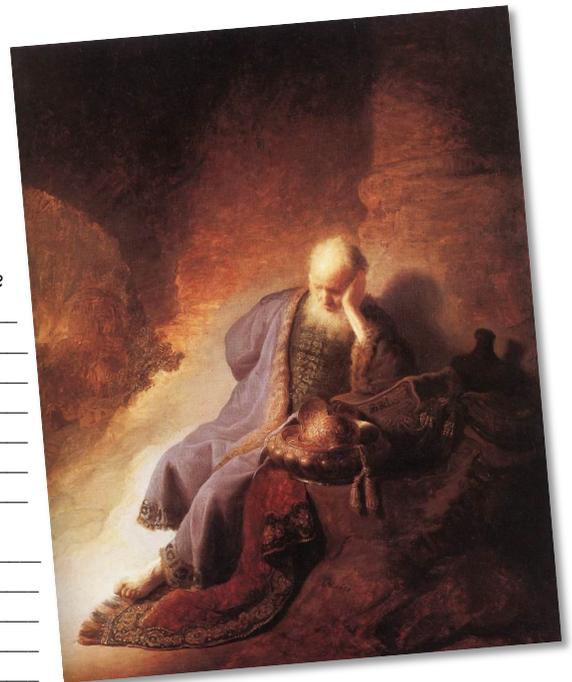
Is the case the same for you in your day? Do people flock more to places of entertainment and appeasement than to the place where God is worshiped and known? Beware of this deception. When God's Truth is most needed is the time when it is most unappreciated and scorned. Yet such is the time to live it and proclaim it...unashamed. Be faithful to the faithful God.

Q&A

...FOR APPLICATION

What are you facing right now that undercuts your trust in God?

How will you be faithful to our faithful God? _____



"Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem" Rembrandt, 1631

CENTRAL PURPOSE OF JEREMIAH'S MISSION:

"See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.

... Therefore behold, I am going to make them know – this time I will make them know My power and My might; and they shall know that My name is the LORD." (1:10; 16:21)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

¹ Feinberg, Charles L. *Jeremiah: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982: 2.

² Hunter, Michael J. *A Guide to Jeremiah*. London: SPCK, 1993: 4.

³ Smith, Gary V. *The Prophets as Preachers: An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994: 192-3.

⁴ White, Reginald E.O. *The Indomitable Prophet: A Biographical Commentary on Jeremiah*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992: 11.

⁵ Ironside, Henry A. *Notes on the Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremiah, "The Weeping Prophet."* Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux Brothers, 1928: 15.

⁶ Bramer, Stephen J. *Bible Exposition 104 Class Notes: Jeremiah*. Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 2008: 1.

4 STAGES IN JEREMIAH'S LIFE

Fill in the Blank...

1. _____ful: A Bold Young Man Called by God. (1, 7-8)
2. _____ful: A Man Doubting His Call and Wanting to Quit. (12:1-4; 20:14-18)
3. _____ful: A Mature Man Hoping in God's Future Plan. (23:1-8; KEY: 70 Years of Captivity Prophesied: 25:11-13; New Covenant: 31:31-40).
4. _____ful: An Old Man having Faith in the Fulfillment of God's Future Plan. (32:9-15, 16-27, 36-44; Eternal Davidic Covenant – 33:14-26)