

## **A User's Guide to JEREMIAH**

Sunday Evening, November 3, 2024 – WOCC – Rich Howell

**Background of Jeremiah:** Jeremiah is often called “the weeping prophet” (due to his difficult ministry and the fact that his other book is called *Lamentations!*), but it is more accurate to think of him as God’s “tough and tender” prophet. His message was fiery and convicting, while his spirit was humble and his heart compassionate (like our Lord Jesus!). He began his prophetic ministry reluctantly – a young man who didn’t think he had “what it takes” to be a prophet of Yahweh, but God had other ideas! His would not be an easy ministry, as God forewarned. In fact, his audience would become his ADVERSARIES!

Isaiah prophesied to JUDAH (Southern Kingdom) during the decline and fall of Israel (the Northern Kingdom), Jeremiah prophesied to JUDAH and Jerusalem during its decline and fall by the hand of the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar (605-586 BC). Jeremiah was in Jerusalem during the precipitating events, the collapse and the aftermath of the city’s destruction. And, unlike Isaiah, Jeremiah was not well respected or taken so seriously. He was considered an annoyance, an ally of Babylon, a prophet of doom, a pessimist, a “kill-joy”, who lowered Judah’s morale and dashed its hopes for “peace” and a quick resolution to the Babylonian threat. Jeremiah’s audience was the people of Jerusalem, from kings to peasants. In the final analysis, he proved to be a FAITHFUL messenger and minister for Yahweh God, to that generation and to all generations!

**Who wrote Jeremiah?** Jeremiah, with a big assist from his loyal scribe, BARUCH (36:1-4,13-18,27-28,32; 45:1)

**When was Jeremiah written?** 627 – 575 BC – from the reign of good king JOSIAH until the disastrous migration to Egypt of those left in Judah (See 1:1-3). Jeremiah began his ministry about 60 years after Isaiah finished his. Others who prophesied during the five decades of Jeremiah’s ministry include Nahum (635-620 BC), Zephaniah (630-620 BC), Habakkuk (620-609 BC), Daniel (605-536 BC, in Babylon, among the imperial leaders) and Ezekiel (593-573 BC, also in Babylon, among the Jewish exiles).

**A literary note:** *Jeremiah is somewhat easier to study and follow than Isaiah. One reason is that it contains more narrative, more of a story line. It is also more sequential and chronological than Isaiah, containing many time references. This makes it easier to study each section in its historical context.*

**“Anything you say can and will be used against you...”** God’s message through Jeremiah includes many of the sayings, idioms, slogans and remarks made by God’s wayward people and/or their leaders. Their words are most revealing, but certainly not to be believed or followed! **1:7; 2:20,23-28; 2:31; 2:34-35; 5:12-13; 5:19; 6:14,16-17; 7:3-11; 8:4-8; 11:21; 14:13-14; 18:11-12; 21:13; 22:21; 23:16-17; 23:29-40; 31:29-30**

**Notable prophecies pointing to the Christ and His Kingdom:**

**3:16-17; 23:5-6; 30:8-9; 30:21; 31:15; 31:31-34; 32:7-9; 32:37-42; 33:14-16; 33:23-26; 50:4-5**

**Did U Know...?** MORE CHAPTERS DOESN’T ALWAYS MEAN LONGER! Jeremiah is actually a longer book than Isaiah, even though it has 14 fewer chapters! In fact, on the basis of total word count, Jeremiah is the longest book in the Bible, even topping the Psalms!

**Honorable “Mentions”:** The New Testament quotes or alludes to Scriptures from Jeremiah about 43 times. That ranks 8<sup>th</sup> out of the 39 Old Testament books in number of references. Isaiah, Psalms, Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Leviticus and Daniel are 1<sup>st</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup>.

**And I Quote!** The prophet Jeremiah was truly a spokesman and “mouthpiece” for God! The phrase, “*Thus says the LORD*”, or some form of it, appears 152 times in 52 chapters!

## Jeremiah from A to Z

*A sketch of Jeremiah sprinkled with 26 highlights*

### THE CALL ... (1-38)

#### of Jeremiah to ministry (1)

- A. Pre-natal PLAN! (1:4-10)
- B. “If God is FOR us...”! (1:17-19)

#### of Jerusalem to repent (2-38)

- C. You are what you FOLLOW! (2:5)
- D. That just doesn’t hold WATER! (2:13; 17:13)
- E. Another thing that gets WORSE with age! (4:14)
- F. “Peace, peace!” (6:14; 8:11; 14:13-14; 28:3-4)
- G. In need of a little more “BLUSH”! (6:15)
- H. God’s way or the WRONG way? (6:16-17; 2:17; 5:4-5; 30-31; 7:23-24; 8:6; 10:23-24; 21:8; 32:38-40 & John 14:6!)
- I. \_\_\_\_\_ security! (7:1-11)
- J. Something to \_\_\_\_\_ about! (9:23-24)
- K. Accept no \_\_\_\_\_! (10:1-12)
- L. \_\_\_\_\_ to change! (13:23)
- M. Who do you \_\_\_\_\_? (17:5-8)
- N. \_\_\_\_\_ attack! (17:9-10)
- O. \_\_\_\_\_ preach! \_\_\_\_\_ preach! (20:7-9)
- P. God’s \_\_\_\_\_ plan! (29:4-14, especially v. 11)
- Q. \_\_\_\_\_ love! (31:3)
- R. A \_\_\_\_\_ covenant! (31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13)
- S. No such thing as “\_\_\_\_\_”! (32:17,27; Gen 18:14)
- T. A \_\_\_\_\_ from the Rechabites! (Chapter 35)
- U. The king who cut it, but couldn’t \_\_\_\_\_ it! (Chapter 36)
- V. Jeremiah’s name is “\_\_\_\_\_”! (Chapter 38)

### THE FALL ... (39-52)

#### of Judah & Jerusalem (39-45 & 52)

- W. Where there’s a “\_\_\_\_\_” ... (41:17-43:7)
- X. Mis-reading the \_\_\_\_\_! (44:15-23)
- Y. A \_\_\_\_\_ of hope! (52:31-34)

#### of the surrounding nations (46-51)

- Z. No “\_\_\_\_\_”, please! (48:10; Prov 18:9; Luke 11:23)