**The Book of Jeremiah**

**Introduction**

T

he good LORD called Abraham into the Promise Land and eventually delivered his chosen descendants from Egypt into the blessed piece of real estate to worship Jehovah in the city of Jerusalem on Mount Zion in His place of Presence! He set up the sons of Jacob, the Israelites, as His chosen nation Shemites to be a light to the world including the Japhethites and the Hamites (Gentiles). With a multitude of blessings, what could go wrong? The LORD knew the potential of these sons of Adam and issued warnings. Therefore, Jehovah warned this special people that if they did not observe His commandments, He would fulfil His severe judgment on them, saying, *“The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young”* (Dt. 28:49-50). After about nine hundred years of rebellion against Jehovah and his ordained prophets, the LORD fulfilled His threat to the evil and stubborn nation!

**Backdrop**

The LORD gave godly leaders including Moses, Joshua, the Judges, the Kings (including David, Solomon, and Josiah) and the Prophets to guide the chosen nation in righteousness and rebuke her for wickedness. The nation divided into the Northern Kingdom with terrible kings and the Southern Kingdom with some godly kings. Judgment came to the Northern Kingdom (Israel) in 722 BC and now judgment came to the Southern Kingdom (Judah) in 586 BC. Under the last godly king, Josiah, and the righteous prophets such as Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Jeremiah, the LORD attempted to thwart the rebellion of the Jews. Reluctant Jeremiah arose to the occasion, suffered, and survived the utter destruction.

**The Prophet**

 The prophet Jeremiah (“whom Jehovah has appointed” [147x] Jeremias [1x] Jeremy [2x]), the “weeping prophet” (Jer. 9:1; 13:17), reluctant (Jer. 1:6) and lonely (Jer. 16:2) was the son of the priest Hilkiah, and born in the Benjaminite city of Anathoth. At about twenty years old the LORD called him for service (cf. Ezra 3:8). His time of ministry was at least forty years (627-585 BC) and he helped King Josiah (640-609 BC) with reform and repentance (Jer. 7:3; 26:1). The reform of Josiah was rejected (II Chr. 34:1 ff.) and Judah backslid to judgment (Zeph. 1:8). In the meantime Nineveh fell (613 BC), Josiah died (609 BC), Jehoiakim reigned as an Egyptian vassal (609-598 BC), the battle of Carchemish occurred as Nebuchadnezzar came into power and deported Daniel (605 BC) while capturing Jerusalem, putting Zedekiah in kingship, then deporting Ezekiel (597 BC), and finally sacking and destroying Jerusalem and the Temple (586 BC). Gedaliah was appointed governor and killed, and Jeremiah taken to Egypt (cf. Jer. 44:28). Relevant passages are Jer. 1:1 ff.; Ezk. 1:1 ff.; Dan. 1:1 ff.; II Ki. 21-24; and Lam. 1:1 ff. Jeremiah probably wrote I and II Kings.

Jesus was thought to be the resurrected Jeremias (Mt. 16:14). He is cited twice in the NT (Mt. 2:17; 27:9). Jeremiah suffered heartbreak, betrayal, imprisonment, famine, loss, but served Jehovah faithfully!

**The Chiasmus**

 **A. The Call of Jeremiah (1)**

 **B. Warnings to Judah (2-33)**

 **C. The Pre-Fall of Judah (34-38)**

 **D. The Fall of Judah (39)**

 **C.’ The Post-Fall of Judah (40-45)**

 **B.’ Warnings to Nations (46-51)**

 **A.’ The Fall of Jerusalem (52)**

**I. The Call of Jeremiah (1:1-19**

**Jer. 1:1-3**

\*Jehovah dealt with this son of a priest at the age of twenty (Ezra 3:8) and called and commissioned him and then gave him words of the life, history, and ministry for Jeremiah (647-585 BC = 62 years) to write in a book about himself!

\*His father was Hilkiah (“my portion is Jehovah”) and he was born and raised in the town Anathoth (“answers to prayer”) for priests about three miles from Jerusalem.

\*Privileged to be in a priest’s family, Jeremiah had great responsibility and accountability for his life calling (I Cor. 9:16-19).

\*His call came in the thirteenth year (627 BC) of reforming King Josiah (640-609 BC) the son of evil Amon.

**\***The word also came to him in the days of wicked Jehoiakim (609-597 BC) and to the end of wicked Zedekiah (597-586 BC), including the fall/destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (II Ki. 24:17-25:21).

\*Jeremiah lived some time after the fall and wrote I and II Kings and Lamentations and was taken to Egypt and presumably died there (Jer. 44:28).

\*In his approximately 62 years of life he recounted his life and ministry down to the end in the inspired *Book of Jeremiah*! (can you review your Christian life and ministry thus far?)

**Jer. 1:4-5**

 \*To Jeremiah came the word of the LORD by some means (Amos 1:1; Nah. 1:1).

\*The LORD knew Jeremiah and had a plan for Jeremiah before he was even conceived or *“formed”* (*yatzar* [Gen. 2:7]). Adam and his offspring were all placed in the Book of Life as the elect to fulfill the LORD’s will (II Tim. 2:10)!

\*Every person created including Jeremiah has been sanctified (set apart) to do God’s will. In this dispensation every person needs to be born again, baptized, and an active church member to carry out the great commission (Mt. 28:19-20)!

**Jer. 1:6-7**

\*Every descendent from Adam has the spiritual inclination to say NO! Jeremiah was ready for his old nature to take over (Jer. 17:9). He had a really “good” excuse—he couldn’t speak as a prophet and he was too young! He was a mere “child” at 20 years old! God had heard of excuses before (Ex. 4:10-15)!

\*Jehovah said *“say not”* (strong prohibition: “don’t you even think about your puny excuses!). Don’t

tell the LORD what you are not going to do! He likes the challenge but you may not like His response!