

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Lesson 26

Jeremiah

In this lesson, we continue our survey of the Old Testament by taking a look at the prophet Jeremiah, known as the "weeping prophet". During my days at seminary I was fortunate enough to take a Christian Apologetics course. The aim of that study was to expose us to the reasons and evidences that God exists and that Jesus really is the Messiah. One of the many we examined was prophecy and its fulfillment.

Even if there were no other proof available to us, by simply studying prophecy and how it is fulfilled, we are shown that God indeed is real and purposeful, and His will is always accomplished exactly as He plans. Jeremiah was a first-hand witness, first in proclaiming prophecy, and then in actually witnessing its fulfillment, as God brought judgment and total destruction on Jerusalem and Judah.

In that context, let's examine that prophecy and the man God called to be His prophet for that appointed time. In a nutshell, sixty years following the death of Isaiah, Jeremiah is tasked by God to prophecy about the coming judgment foretold by Isaiah. Jeremiah would not only call out the sins of the people and the nation and proclaim that the Day of Judgment was upon them if they would not repent, he would also see that day of judgment and be an eye witness to it. The book of Lamentations is related to those sad and awful days.

During Jeremiah's days, other prophets were also being used by God. Specifically, Daniel, Ezekiel, Nahum, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk were all used by God during this time. But Jeremiah's task was to both proclaim and witness the coming judgment. It is on the eve of this national disaster, that we begin reading about Jeremiah and his prophecy.

Read the selected passages below and answer the questions below.

1. When was Jeremiah anointed by God to be a prophet? (see Jeremiah 1:4-10)
2. What was Jeremiah's excuse for not wanting to serve as a prophet?
3. What does God's response to Jeremiah reveal to us about God, when He appoints us to accomplish a task?
4. Did Jeremiah have a wife and family? (see Jeremiah 16:1-4)
5. Who became Jeremiah's constant companion? (see Jeremiah 36:4-8)
6. What was the situation like in Jeremiah's day? (see Jeremiah 5:31)

7. What were some of the sins being committed by God's chosen people during Jeremiah's day? (see 2 Kings 21 for some examples)

8. Jeremiah's prophecy is described as fulfilled completely in 2 Kings 24:1-25:30. (This backdrop will form the basis for our study in the next lesson.) After reading it, consider that the Assyrians captured the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC. As a result, Judah (the Southern Kingdom) was constantly threatened either by the Assyrians (the army of the North) or the Egyptians (the army of the south). To protect itself, Judah was constantly forming private alliances with one of these two armies in order to protect itself against the other one. What happened to the Assyrians in 612 BC (25 years before the siege of Jerusalem) that would change Judah's relationship with this nation, and where did it happen?

9. What happened at Carchemish in 605 BC?

10. Approximately how long was the Siege of Jerusalem? (see 2 Kings 25:1-7)

From our study of Jeremiah, we see what it is like to serve God – even when the message is judgment, and even when the work is hard and will bring physical and emotional pain. Nevertheless, in all that happened to Jeremiah, and in all that He witnessed and experienced, Jeremiah remained faithful to God's calling and faithful to God's plan.

Jeremiah was able to understand and see that God's plan was greater than Jeremiah's personal life plans. Jeremiah willingly sacrificed the comfort of this world to serve the eternal God. We need to have that same commitment, that same vision, and that same passion. "God call us, and we will go and serve and do whatever Your will is for us!";. This should be our prayer. This week, let's make it so.

Thanks for studying with us, and have a great week everyone.

In Christ,

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