

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Lesson 26 w/Answers

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)
 - a. ANSWER: God called him before he was born, before he was even created. This demonstrates that God has a plan for His elect, including us before our birth, even before He creates us. How awesome! All that He requires is that we put our complete faith in Him and follow Him.
2. What was Jeremiah's excuse for not wanting to serve as a prophet?
 - a. ANSWER: Jeremiah asserted that he was too young and inexperienced, "only a child". This shows us that God is not concerned about our age or our abilities. He knows that if we follow Him, He will ensure that we succeed in whatever task He sets before us - but we must be willing to go, and willing to do.
3. What does God's response to Jeremiah reveal to us about God, when He appoints us to accomplish a task?
 - a. ANSWER: It shows that He will provide the gifts or talents needed, and He will provide the words that He wants you to speak on His behalf.
4. Did Jeremiah have a wife and family? (see Jeremiah 16:1-4)
 - a. ANSWER: No; he remained single his entire life. God wanted him to remain separate, since He did not want Jeremiah contaminated by the sin of those who lived in the land - those whom God would destroy.
5. Who became Jeremiah's constant companion? (see Jeremiah 36:4-8)
 - a. ANSWER: Baruch, the son of Neriah, became Jeremiah's companion in his service as Jeremiah's scribe.
6. What was the situation like in Jeremiah's day? (see Jeremiah 5:31)
 - a. ANSWER: Prophets, the very representatives of God, were teaching and proclaiming lies, and they were ruling by their own authority. To make matters worse, all of the people liked it that way.

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)
 - a. ANSWER 1: The shedding of innocent blood.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Desecrating God's Holy Temple with idol worship, building a graven image, and building altars to Baal - again, all within God's Holy Temple, thus desecrating the Holiest place in all of Israel.
 - c. ANSWER 3: Depending on alliances with foreign governments for protection, rather than relying on God.
 - d. ANSWER 4: Refusing to obey God's will. God asked them, through Jeremiah, to surrender to His judgment, i.e., to Babylon's army. By doing so, they would avoid complete destruction. Unfortunately for them, they refused.
 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?
 - a. ANSWER: In 612 BC., approximately 150 years after Jonah's visit there, Nineveh would be the site of the final downfall of the Assyrian Empire to the Babylonian army and King Nebuchadnezzar.
 9. What happened at Carchemish in 605 BC?
 - a. ANSWER: The Egyptian Army was defeated by the Babylonians. Then we see Judah attempt an alliance with the Babylonians, allowing them to carry off the things from God's Holy Temple. Eventually, Judah would fall to the Babylonians at the end of the Siege of Jerusalem, in 586 BC.
 10. Approximately how long was the Siege of Jerusalem? (see 2 Kings 25:1-7)
 - a. ANSWER: The siege last approximately thirty months (i.e., 2.5 years).
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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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