

## Jeremiah: The Prophet and His Message



### Background

Jeremiah is not a book we usually turn to for our Bible reading even though one of the verses we quote and hear quoted often is Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” However, not only is Jeremiah filled with beautiful verse and amazing metaphors, but there is also much that we can learn from Jeremiah’s painful life and his hard message to the people of Judah. We will explore these two themes on Sunday.

### Sermon Texts

Jeremiah 1:1-14; 2:1-2, 5-8, 11-13; 12:5; 15:18; 20:7-9, 14-15, 18; 23:5; 31:13-14, 31-34 (ESV)

*1:1 The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, 2 to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. 3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, and until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the captivity of Jerusalem in the fifth month.*

*4 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying,*

*5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”*

*6 Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth.” 7 But the LORD said to me,*

*“Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak.*

*8 Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the LORD.”*

*9 Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, “Behold, I have put my words in your mouth.*

*10 See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow,*

*to build and to plant.”*

*11 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, “Jeremiah, what do you see?” And I said, “I see an almond branch.” 12 Then the LORD said to me, “You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it.” 13 The word of the LORD came to me a second time, saying, “What do you see?” And I said, “I see a boiling pot, facing away from the north.” 14 Then the LORD said to me, “Out of the north disaster shall be let loose upon all the inhabitants of the land.*

...

*2:1 The word of the LORD came to me, saying,  
2 “Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says the LORD,  
“I remember the devotion of your youth,  
your love as a bride,  
how you followed me in the wilderness,  
in a land not sown.*

...

*5 Thus says the LORD:  
“What wrong did your fathers find in me  
that they went far from me,  
and went after worthlessness, and became worthless?  
6 They did not say, ‘Where is the LORD  
who brought us up from the land of Egypt,  
who led us in the wilderness,  
in a land of deserts and pits,  
in a land of drought and deep darkness,  
in a land that none passes through,  
where no man dwells?’  
7 And I brought you into a plentiful land  
to enjoy its fruits and its good things.  
But when you came in, you defiled my land  
and made my heritage an abomination.  
8 The priests did not say, ‘Where is the LORD?’  
Those who handle the law did not know me;  
the shepherds transgressed against me;  
the prophets prophesied by Baal  
and went after things that do not profit.*

...

*11 Has a nation changed its gods,  
even though they are no gods?  
But my people have changed their glory  
for that which does not profit.  
12 Be appalled, O heavens, at this;  
be shocked, be utterly desolate,  
declares the LORD,  
13 for my people have committed two evils:  
they have forsaken me,  
the fountain of living waters,  
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,  
broken cisterns that can hold no water.*

...

**12:5** *"If you have raced with men on foot, and they have wearied you,  
how will you compete with horses?  
And if in a safe land you are so trusting,  
what will you do in the thicket of the Jordan?"*

...

**15:18** *Why is my pain unceasing,  
my wound incurable,  
refusing to be healed?  
Will you be to me like a deceitful brook,  
like waters that fail?*

...

**20:7** *O LORD, you have deceived me,  
and I was deceived;  
you are stronger than I,  
and you have prevailed.  
I have become a laughingstock all the day;  
everyone mocks me.*

**8** *For whenever I speak, I cry out,  
I shout, "Violence and destruction!"  
For the word of the LORD has become for me  
a reproach and derision all day long.*

**9** *If I say, "I will not mention him,  
or speak any more in his name,"  
there is in my heart as it were a burning fire  
shut up in my bones,  
and I am weary with holding it in,  
and I cannot.*

...

**14** *Cursed be the day  
on which I was born!  
The day when my mother bore me,  
let it not be blessed!*

**15** *Cursed be the man who brought the news to my father,  
"A son is born to you,"  
making him very glad.*

...

**18** *Why did I come out from the womb  
to see toil and sorrow,  
and spend my days in shame?*

...

**23:5** *"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.*

...

**31:13** *Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,  
and the young men and the old shall be merry.  
I will turn their mourning into joy;  
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.*

14 *I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance,  
and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness,  
declares the LORD."*

...

31 *"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."*

## Discussion Questions

### 1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- c. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you the most?

### 2. Sunday questions

- a. **Financial report:** How do you view giving? Do you view it as worship? Why or why not? Do you have any questions regarding our church finances?
- b. "Like Jeremiah, each one of us is a divine choice. No one is an accident. And, we are all set apart to live holy lives." How do you respond to this good news?
- c. Like Jeremiah, all of us have a purpose and calling for our lives, given to us by God, something we cannot not do. What would you say your main purpose and calling is? Why do you think this?
- d. "Trying to follow Jesus is not easy." What is your main difficulty in fulfilling your purpose right now? How can other people encourage you on the Jesus Way?
- e. "The true message of success is remaining faithful to your calling, like Jeremiah." What do you need from Jesus to be faithful like Jeremiah? Make this your prayer this week.
- f. "God really, really does not like us to worship idols." Can you be honest and share what your idol(s)/false loves are? What practices would help you regularly "turn to Christ" (from east to west)?