

Intro to JEREMIAH

יְרֵמְיָהוּ, יֵרֵמְיָהוּ [Yirmâyah, Yirmâyahuw /yir·meh·yaw/]¹
Jeremiah = “whom Jehovah has appointed”

Authorship and Date. The author of the book is “Jeremiah son of Hilkiah” (1:1), Jeremiah ministered during the last forty years of Judah’s history, from the thirteenth year of Josiah (627 B.C.) to the destruction of Jerusalem and beyond (587 B.C.).

Historical Setting: When Jeremiah began his ministry, Assyria was the leading power in the world, but Egypt and Babylon were rapidly gaining strength. In 607 B.C. the Babylonians took Nineveh and destroyed the power of Assyria. Babylon then turned to Judah, and Judah’s “politicians” advised the king to ask Egypt for help. Jeremiah was always against an Egyptian alliance. He knew that Judah’s only hope was the Lord, but her sins were so great, the nation had lost the blessing of God. Babylon finally did capture Judah and take Jerusalem (606–586).²

Theme: God’s warning and subsequent judgment for Judah’s Sins

Outline:

1. Jeremiah’s Call (1:1-19)
2. Judah’s Sinful Condition (2:1-12:17)
3. The Certainty of Captivity (13:1-29:32)
4. The Promise of Restoration (30:1-33:26)
5. Disintegration Before Jerusalem Falls (34:1-35:19)
6. Jeremiah Suffers (36:1-38:28)
7. The Fall of Jerusalem (39:1-45:5)
8. Foreign Nations Judged (46:1-51:64)
9. Historical Appendix (52:1-34)

¹Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Test of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.* electronic ed. Ontario : Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996, S. H3414

²Wiersbe, Warren W.: *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament.* Wheaton, IL : Victor Books, 1993, S. Je 18:1

The Lord's call to make Jeremiah His prophet summarized the message of the man of God:

"See, I have set you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant." (1:10)

It was primarily a message of doom, but it included hope.

Jeremiah was the prophet of **DOOM**. He called Judah to repent (3:1; 7:4-7), but they refused (6:16-17; 20:1-2; 32:2-5; 37:11-21; 38:1-13; 43:1-7). Thus, Jeremiah foretold their destruction (5:9-10,14-18,29; 6:22-26; 7:16,32-34; 14:15-16; 25:8-10). Israel was to be so destroyed as a nation that they could never be made whole again (19:10-11). This forever answers the premillennial claim that national Israel will someday be restored.

But Jeremiah was also the messenger of **HOPE**. He preached that Israel should place their trust in the Lord (9:23-24). A faithful remnant would be restored (23:3; 31:7-9). Ezra's record of the fulfillment of the restoration promise means this prophecy has been fulfilled, and one should not look for a future restoration of Israel to the land of Canaan. Jeremiah also prophesied salvation in Christ (23:5-6; 33:15-16).³

Jeremiah and Jesus

The similarities between Jeremiah and Jesus Christ are worth noting. Neither married (16:2), and both were rejected by their own towns (11:21 and 12:6 with Luke 4:16–30). Jeremiah ministered under the menacing shadow of Babylon, Jesus under the shadow of Rome. Both were considered traitors by their people. Jeremiah was viciously opposed by the false prophets, Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees, the false leaders of His day. Both wept over the city of Jerusalem, and both predicted its ruin. Jeremiah gathered few disciples about him; Jesus had a small following. Both were arrested falsely and persecuted. Both emphasized a religion of the heart, and not merely one of outward forms and ceremonies. It was Jeremiah 7:11 that Jesus quoted when He cleansed the temple and told the priests they had made it "a den of thieves." Both emphasized the new covenant in the heart (Jer. 31:31–37; Heb. 8:7ff). In their preaching, both used striking illustrations and comparisons. Both revealed a tender, sympathetic heart that was crushed by the wickedness of a nation that should have obeyed God's Word. In the end, it seemed that both were failures in their lives and ministries, but God honored them and made their work successful.⁴

³ <http://www.christistheway.com/2003/a03a04ba.html>

⁴ Wiersbe, Warren W.: *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*. Wheaton, IL : Victor Books, 1993, S. Je 18:1