

COME BACK!
GOD'S MERCIFUL PLEA TO A CORRUPT CULTURE
A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

Jeremiah the man:

- He was from Anathoth (2 miles north of Jerusalem) (1:1)
- His father's name was Hilkiah, who was a priest (1:1)
- Jeremiah was a prophet from 627 BC to at least 586 BC, 41 years, spanning five kings (2 Kings 23:28-25:30; Jeremiah 1:1-3).
- (For additional background information on the Kings who ruled during Jeremiah's ministry, read 2 Kings 22-25; 2 Chronicles 34-36)
- He was not married nor did he have children (16:1-4).
- He is known as the 'weeping prophet.' He faced much persecution, often felt alone in his mission, and honestly expressed his emotions when God was silent (20:7-18).
- He faithfully delivered God's message of repentance to the obstinate Israelites in spite of all the hardship he encountered from them (1:9-10, 17-19).

Background on the book of Jeremiah:

- Israel was a united kingdom under the leaderships of Saul, David, and Solomon.
- The kingdom of Israel divided into two kingdoms in 930 BC; Israel in the north, Judah in the south.
- The northern kingdom of Israel was completely destroyed in 722 BC by the Assyrians.
- Like the Israelites in the north, those in Judah were guilty of forgetting about the LORD, forsaking the LORD, and following false gods (1:16).
- Jeremiah ministered in Judah and repeatedly warned of their coming destruction by the Babylonians (led by King Nebuchadnezzar), which ended up happening in three phases; 605 BC (when Jehoiakim was king), 597 BC (when Jehoiachin was king), and 586 BC (when Zedekiah was king).
- Jeremiah prophesied that the Israelites would be in captivity in Babylon for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12; Ezra

1:1-3), before returning to the land in three phases (538 BC, 458 BC, 445 BC).

- The material in the book of Jeremiah is arranged thematically, rather than chronologically, so it can be challenging to follow at times.
- Here is a general outline of the book of Jeremiah:
 - Part 1: The Call of Jeremiah (1:1-19)
 - Part 2: The Prophecies to Judah (2:1-45:5)
 - Part 3: The Prophecies to the Gentiles (46:1-51:64)
 - Part 4: The Fall of Jerusalem (52:1-34)*~ Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary, p. 645*

Major themes in the book of Jeremiah:

- The people had turned from worshipping the LORD to worshipping idols.
- The LORD promised judgment upon Judah, by the Babylonians, if they would not repent.
- The people did not repent and most (except the poorest) were taken into captivity to Babylon (modern day Iraq).
- The LORD promised that He would make a New Covenant with His people (31:31-34)
- The LORD promised restoration to the people after their time of judgment (30:3).

Jeremiah the Prophet in other Scriptures:

- 2 Chronicles 35:25; 36:12, 21-22; Ezra 1:1; Daniel 9:2; Matthew 2:17-18; 16:14; 27:9

Background on the book of Lamentations:

- It was written by Jeremiah shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC.
- It consists of five laments (cries) written as poems, in reaction to the destruction of the city.
- Even in the midst of total destruction there is hope and mercy in the LORD (3:19-26).

God Communicated to Jeremiah through Various Actions:

- The almond tree and the boiling pot, 1:11-14
- The ruined waistband, 13:1-11
- The bush in the desert & the tree by the water, 17:5-8
- The potter & the clay, 18:1-6
- The smashed pot, 19:1,10-15
- Baskets of good and rotten figs, 24
- Jeremiah wore bonds and a yoke, 27

Repeated Phrases or Ideas:

- Valley of Hinnom and Topheth, 7:31-32; 19:6,11-14
- The sound of the bride groom and bride, 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; 33:1
- “I will be your God, you will be My people,” 7:23; 11:4; 24:7; 30:22; 31:1,33; 32:38
- Days are coming (negative and positive), 7:32; 9:25; 16:14; 19:6; 23:5,7; 30:3; 31:27,31,38; 33:14; 48:12; 49:2; 51:47; 51:52
- God sent His prophets again and again and the people did not listen, 7:25; 25:4; 26:4-5; 29:19; 35:15; 44:4
- Do not pray for the people, 7:20; 11:14; 14:11-12

Preaching Series:

Come Back! God’s Merciful Plea to a Corrupt Culture

1:1-19	Speak for Me!
2-6	Come Back from Idols
2:19	Come Back to Biblical Living
7	Come Back from Self Reliance
10	Come Back to the Only God
11-16	Come Back Before Judgment Comes
17	Come Back from an Evil Heart
18:1-4	Come Back to God’s Mercy
20-22, 32-33, 38	Keep Speaking for God
23, 33	Come Back to the King
29:1-14	Come Back from Despair
36	Come Back to God’s Word
31	Come Back to God
39, 44, 52	Come Back Before its Too Late!
Lamentations 3:19-26	The Return of Hope
Wrap up of series	

Major Themes in Jeremiah:

- Our hearts easily wander into sin, 17:9.
 - We have idolatrous hearts, 1:16; 2:24; 5:8
 - We have stubborn, rebellious, and evil hearts, 3:17; 5:23; 7:24; 11:8; 16:12; 17:9; 18:12
 - We have hypocritical hearts, 2:13,27
- God cannot tolerate sin, 44:2-3.
 - He is holy, 50:29; 51:5
 - He is patient, 2-6, 7:25; 25:4; 35:15; 44:4
 - Unrelenting sin invites God’s judgment, 44:2-3
- Serving the Lord requires sacrifice, 26:8
 - He was chosen in his youth to serve God, 1:5-10
 - He was instructed not to marry or have children, 16:2
 - He was a laughingstock to the people, 20:7; Lamentations 3:14
 - He was schemed against, 20:10
 - He was physically beaten for his messages, 20:2; 37:15
 - He was banned from the temple and stayed in hiding, 36:5,19
 - He was put in jail, 32:2; 37:15; 38:28-39:14
 - He was thrown into a cistern, 38:6-13
 - He was threatened with death on multiple occasions, 26:8,11; 38:4
 - He was ignored, 43:2
 - We need conviction to serve the Lord, 20:9
- There is always hope with Jesus, 31:33-34
 - Hope for a future, 29:11
 - Hope of a Savior King, 23:5; 30:9; 33:17-18
 - Hope of a new relationship with God, 31:33-34

Key Verses:

1:16; 19:15; 22:8-9; 44:2-6,22-23