

Route 66: road trip through the Bible

Grace Church¹ Lesson 37 March 22, 2020 Teacher: John Carroll

Today's lesson: Jeremiah-a prophet for post-Christian times²

1. Read Jeremiah chapter 1. Notice that Jeremiah's life and ministry extended over the reigns of the last five kings of Judah before the captivity by Babylon.

Timeline (BC)

640	609		598	597	586
Reign of Josiah (640-609)	Reign of Jehoahaz (3 months)	Reign of Jehoiakim (609-598) Jeremiah's scroll burned	Reign of Jehoiachin (3 months)	Reign of Zedekiah (597-586)	
King made reforms in 628 God calls Jeremiah 626		1 st Babylonian Deportations 605 BC		1 st Babylonian invasion	2 nd Babylonian invasion

2. Jeremiah's name means "the LORD exalts". In Ch. 1 we get understanding about the prophet himself (his priestly background) and about God's call to him to be a prophet. Jeremiah's life was hard. He was lonely (15:17) as he delivered an unpopular message and the Lord prohibited him from taking a wife (16:1). He was in conflict with the authorities and the false prophets of his day that told the people what they wanted to hear. Hostility against him was violent at times. King Zedekiah consulted him but did not heed him (37:3, 17). Nebuchadnezzar protected him (39:11-14). He warned the survivors in Judah not to flee into Egypt, but they rejected his warning and forced him to go there with them (Ch. 42-44). It is thought that he died there.

¹ Due to COVID-19 meeting restrictions this lesson is being distributed for personal study at home

² Ryken p. 301 Ryken calls Jeremiah "a prophet for post-Christian times"

3. The book of the prophet Jeremiah, like other books of prophets presents some challenges to the reader and to the teacher. Narrative sections which describe incidents in Jeremiah's life are dispersed throughout the book and mixed with oracles of judgment and salvation which the prophet delivered. You may want to read the biographical passages to get a picture of the man Jeremiah and his life. Then go back and read the chapters containing his prophetic messages. Use this chart to guide you if you choose to read the book this way.

Jeremiah's Life	Jeremiah's messages of judgment and salvation
<p>Ch. 1 God calls Jeremiah, a priest, to serve Him as a prophet.</p> <p>Ch. 7 Jeremiah preaches in the streets.</p> <p>Ch. 11-20 Jeremiah struggles with opposition from traitors and resentment toward the LORD.</p> <p>Ch. 26-29 Jeremiah opposes false belief. His life is threatened.</p> <p>Ch. 32 Jeremiah buys property as a sign of hope.</p> <p>Ch. 36-40 His scroll is burned. He is imprisoned in a well. Jerusalem falls to Babylon.</p> <hr/> <p>For more about Jeremiah's life see 2 Kings 22-25; 2 Chronicles 34-36; and Lamentations</p>	<p>Ch. 2-6 Israel sinned in forsaking the LORD. Disaster is coming to Jerusalem.</p> <p>Ch. 8-10 A sad and grieved Jeremiah denounces idolatry & hypocrisy but there is hope in the LORD.</p> <p>Ch. 21-25 Jeremiah stands up to kings, false prophets, and the general population.</p> <p>Ch. 30-31 God will restore Judah and Israel and make a new covenant with them.</p> <p>Ch. 33-35 God will fulfill His covenant with David rewarding obedience but punishing unfaithfulness.</p> <p>Ch. 41-52 Judah's rebellion against Babylon and against God is futile. God will judge the nations including Babylon which will be utterly destroyed.</p>

Questions for discussion: How does Jeremiah's teaching about a new covenant (Ch. 31) point to Jesus Christ and His gospel (Luke 22:20)? Some scholars call Jeremiah "a prophet for post-Christian times." Do you agree? How are our times similar to those of Jeremiah? How might believers find encouragement from Jeremiah to be faithful in these days when fear of the Lord is diminished, and the gospel is considered by many to be "hate speech"? What attitudes and character qualities of Jeremiah do you find admirable?

Next week: Lamentations