

Jeremiah 1:1-10

The opening chapter of the book has the commissioning of Jeremiah by God. Jeremiah has a lot of doubts about his being useful to God. He even said he couldn't speak for God as "I am a child." When God commissions, God provides.

1 **The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin:**

Jeremiah was from a priestly background. Anathoth was a small village about three miles from Jerusalem. It was in the land of Benjamin but given over as a priestly city.

"And the children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their suburbs. And out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with her suburbs, Geba with her suburbs, Anathoth with her suburbs, and Almon with her suburbs; four cities," Joshua 21:3,17-18.

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.**

Jeremiah received his first instructions from the LORD as a prophet in the thirteenth year of King Josiah of Judah's reign (640-609 B.C.), namely, 627 B.C. His history is contained in (2 Kings 22:1; 2 Kings 24:30; 2 Chronicles 34:1; 2 Chronicles 35:1). The first twelve chapters of Jeremiah throw much light upon the general character of the Jews in his day. Josiah, a godly king, was aided by Jeremiah the prophet in spreading through his kingdom the knowledge and worship of Jehovah. The great day of Josiah's life was the day when the "book of the Law" was found and passover was celebrated once again in the eighteenth year of his reign, 2 Kings 22-23. When Pharaoh-necho went from Egypt to Carchemish to carry on his war along the seacoast. Necho reluctantly paused and gave him battle in the valley of Esdraelon. Josiah was mortally wounded, and died before he could reach Jerusalem. He was buried with extraordinary honors.

A godly prophet and a godly king would leave the people of Judah with no excuse if they rejected Jeremiah's message.

3 **It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.**

Jeremiah also received prophecies from the Lord during the reign of King Jehoiakim (609-598 B.C.), and until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah (597-586 B.C.) when the exile of the residents of Jerusalem began in the fifth month of 586 B.C. The writer omitted Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin from this list of kings probably because their reigns each lasted only three months, in 609 and 598-597 B.C. respectively.

4 **Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,**

Jeremiah gets a special message from the LORD. This is not uncommon in this book. In verse 13 of this chapter we learn, "And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying,..."

Today, God doesn't speak to us directly, as with Jeremiah for example. But, the message we have is just as authoritative, and compelling, as God's word to Jeremiah.

5 **Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.**

God formed Jeremiah in the womb (belly). If one claims to be a Christian, they are implying they believe the Bible. The Bible is clear that God created men and women in the womb. In a pregnancy a woman is carrying a human.

"For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." Psalm 139:13-14

Abortion is the killing of a human being. To believe in abortion and to claim to be a Christian is an oxymoron ("combination of contradictory or incongruous words (such as cruel kindness)", Merriam Webster Dictionary).

Jeremiah's Call

1. He was chosen by God - "I formed thee"; "I sanctified thee"; "I ordained thee"
2. He was to be a prophet to the nations (as well as to Israel)

6 Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

Jeremiah's response was not one of true humility but an excuse not to follow God's calling.

"Jeremiah said to God, 'I am only a youth' (Jeremiah 1:6). The word youth - unfortunately rendered child in some versions of the Bible - ordinarily denotes a young, unmarried man in his teens or early twenties. Most scholars think that Jeremiah was around 20 to 25 at the time of his call. His reply is not so much revealing his age as much as a deep sense of immaturity. He felt inferior, inexperienced, and intimidated by the size of the task to which God was summoning him."

Rick Ezell, *Jeremiah 1 Sermon: Make No Excuses*

God has ordained (called) all of His children to speak for Him. It matters not whether you are a child or an adult, man or woman. When we are saved we are ordained by God to be His ambassadors.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 **bold added**

7 But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

God rebukes (corrects) Jeremiah about his attitude and makes two demands:

1. Go to all that I send you.

Today, believers have the responsibility today of the "great commission."

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Matthew 28:19-20

2. Declare the word of God ("whatsoever I command thee").

The Bible is a believers only authority for truth

- The Word of God is truth - John 17:17

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

- The Word of God is closed - Revelation 22:18-19

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

"Although the warning in Revelation 22:18-19 is specific to the Book of Revelation, the principle applies to anyone who seeks to intentionally distort God's Word. Moses gave a similar warning in Deuteronomy 4:1-2, where he cautioned the Israelites that they must listen to and obey the commandments of the Lord, neither adding to nor taking away from His revealed Word. Proverbs 30:5-6 contains a similar admonition to anyone who would add to God's words: he will be rebuked and proven to be a liar. Although the warning in Revelation 22:18-19 applies specifically to the Book of Revelation, its principle must be applied to the entire revealed Word of God." GotQuestions.com

- The Word of God is exalted above the name of God - Psalm 138:2

"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."

- The Word of God is more authoritative than dreams, visions, or miracles - Jeremiah 23:28-31

"The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour.

Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith."

We will address this in greater detail when we get to chapter 23, but suffice it to say at this time, that the acceptance of God's speaking through dreams and visions today, especially in the Muslim world, is not biblical, and if it is not biblical, it is then a deception of Satan, whether directly or indirectly.

Pastor Dennis McBride states, in his excellent paper, *An Evaluation of Muslim Dreams & Visions of Isa (Jesus)*, Feb. 20, 2012, <http://bethanyhavasuu.org/journal/?p=131>

"I had no desire to resist or even question what God might be doing, but I feared these dreams of Isa might be little more than extra biblical psychological or spiritual encounters that could supplant God' Word and potentially lead their participants away from biblical authority rather than into it. And I was greatly concerned to hear the supposedly biblical rationale some of my fellow conservative Bible teachers were offering in defense of this movement. Some former defenders of the centrality and sufficiency of God' Word in evangelism seemed suddenly to be sacrificing that doctrine on the altar of subjective mystical encounters. I needed to understand why, and to evaluate their rationale by God' Word. I also needed to examine Isa' communication to determine if it was consistent with Christ' communication while He was on earth."

8 Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah was:

The "weeping prophet" - "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" Jeremiah 9:1

"But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive." Jeremiah 13:17

The "reluctant prophet" - "Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." Jeremiah 1:6

The "prophet of loneliness" - "Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place." Jeremiah 16:2

The "persecuted prophet"

Falsely accused - "For even thy brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; yea, they have called a multitude after thee: believe them not, though they speak fair words unto thee." Jeremiah 12:6

Cursed - "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me." Jeremiah 15:10

Plotted against - "Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words." Jeremiah 18:18

Put in stocks - "Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the LORD." Jeremiah 20:2

Laughed at and mocked - "O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me." Jeremiah 20:7

Threatened with death by the leaders - Jeremiah 26:1-24

Falsely imprisoned -

"And when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward was there, whose name was Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans. Then said Jeremiah, It is false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes. Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison." Jeremiah 37:13-15

Accused of treachery - "Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt." Jeremiah 38:4

Put into a cistern (prison) - "Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire." Jeremiah 38:6

Taken against his will, by his countrymen, into Egypt

"And it came to pass, that when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, even all these words, Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there: But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon. So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah. But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; Even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah. So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: thus came they even to Tahpanhes." Jeremiah 43:1-7

Jeremiah was not to be concerned with the people who were against him, because God was with him.

In Hebrews 11 there are many who are extolled because of their faith and victories. But, there are others who are extolled because of their faith but died.

"And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented." Hebrews 11:36-37

"According to the early church father Tertullian, the Jews stoned Jeremiah to death in Daphne (Tahpanhes in Hebrew), Egypt. Jeremiah's 'crime' was telling them truths they did not want to hear [Scorpiace, Chapter VIII]. The tradition of Jeremiah's martyrdom is backed by other first-century, extrabiblical writings (Lives of the Prophets), and invoked in the works of Jerome, Isidore of Seville's De Ortu Et Obitu Patrum, and Peter Comestor's twelfth-century Historia Scholastica."

The words "some died by stoning" in Hebrews 11:37 are quite possibly an allusion to Jeremiah's death. This New Testament chapter, which some refer to as the "Hall of Faith," introduces a long list of Old Testament heroes of faith, including anonymous martyrs and tortured saints. Although we cannot know with certainty, Jeremiah likely died by stoning in Egypt."

<https://www.gotquestions.org/how-did-Jeremiah-die.html>

9 Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

Jeremiah has a uniqueness to his ministry, as do all the prophets, that the words he speaks are "Thus says the LORD."

10 See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

In this verse we have the two focuses of this book that was mentioned in the introduction of Jeremiah.

1. I will punish

"to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down"

"As Isaiah speaks of the salvation of the Lord, Ezekiel of the glory of the Lord, and Daniel of the kingdom of the Lord, so Jeremiah incessantly proclaims the Lord's judgment."

Charles Feinberg, Jeremiah, page 30

Jeremiah is called by God to prophesy over the nations and kingdoms about their destruction.

"For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." Jeremiah 30:11

2. I will restore

"to build, and to plant"

"And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the LORD." Jeremiah 31:28

Jeremiah 32:

- 37 Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:
- 38 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God:
- 39 And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:
- 40 And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.
- 41 Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.