

The Book of Jeremiah

"Jeremiah is one of the bravest, tenderest, and most pathetic figures in history; and his book of prophecies is one which everybody should read. Indeed, there is good reason why we should read the prophecies of Jeremiah with much thoughtfulness just now, for there is no little correspondence between the fateful days of this noble prophet and our own.

"I know of no man who reveals a truer heart-likeness to Jesus Himself than does Jeremiah, in his suffering sympathy both with God and men, in his unretaliating forbearance, his yearning concern for his fellows, his guileless motive, his humility, his willingness for self-sacrifice, and his utter faithfulness, even to the point of unsparing severity in denunciation. All disappointed, disappreciated, disregarded, misunderstood, misrepresented, and persecuted Christian workers today, sticking on at their work, but with a leaden weight at the heart and a choke of grief in the throat, should turn aside again and again to commune with the heroic great-heart of these pages. Indeed, we cannot properly study this Book of Jeremiah without studying Jeremiah himself; for the man is as much the book as the prophecies which he uttered.

"With an intensity of love and sympathy, he himself lived and felt and suffered in his message. His own heart-strings vibrated to every major and every minor chord. The man and his message were one.

"We have already remarked that these books of the prophets should be read in close connection with the times and circumstances in which they were written. This is especially so in the case of Jeremiah.

"This Book of Jeremiah reveals to us the process of the Divine judgment in national life....The judgment of the Almighty on the nation was operating through these things which, to sin-warped little human minds were simply (as men call them) '*misfortunes*.' When sin has quenched the vision of God, it also renders the mind incapable of seeing the operations of Divine judgment in the things which are permitted to happen."

"So it was then. So it is today. Events moved on and vindicated Jeremiah. So do events move on and vindicate God's Jeremiahs among men today. The great lessons of this Book of Jeremiah speak to all people in all ages. Where sin has destroyed the vision of God, men think that calamities which are permitted to come upon them are indications that God has abandoned interest in them; but where the vision of God is clear, as it was with Jeremiah, the things which are permitted to happen are seen in their true significance; and the very calamities are seen to be the evidences that *God has not abandoned His throne!*"

"There is another lesson in this book, too, which stands out prominently, and which should be very comforting to all sincere Christian workers today. *God does not reckon the worth of service for Himself merely in terms of success.*"

J. Sidlow Baxter, Explore the Book, pages 259, 260, 270-71

CHRONOLOGY OF JEREMIAH'S MINISTRY

640 BC	Josiah becomes king of Judah - the last godly king.
628 BC	Josiah began to purge Judah in his 12th year
627 BC	Lord first spoke to Jeremiah in 13th year of Josiah. Jeremiah 1-6 under Josiah's reign
622 BC	In 18th year of Josiah Book of the Law found in House of God! (2 Kings 22:8)
612 BC	Nineveh the capital of Assyria was sacked.
609 BC	King Josiah killed at Megiddo by Necho of Egypt, who was fighting to bolster Assyria (2 Kings 23:29-30).
609 BC	Jehoahaz ruled Judah 3 months, deposed by Neco, taken to Egypt in chains (2 Kings 23:32-33; cf Jeremiah 22:10).
609-598 BC	Jehoiakim reigned over Judah as an Egyptian vassal (Jeremiah 22:13-17).
605 BC	Battle of Carchemish. Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egyptian forces (Jeremiah 46:2). "Turning point in world history"
605 BC	First deportation of Jews to Babylon - Daniel in this group (2 Kings 24:1).
601 BC	Jehoiakim sided with Egypt against Jeremiah's warnings (Jeremiah 22:13-19).
597 BC	2nd Babylonian invasion takes Jerusalem, deports Ezekiel & 10,000; Zedekiah replaces Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:17)
592 BC	Ezekiel begins his prophetic ministry (some 35 years after Jeremiah had begun his)
586 BC	Fall of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 39:1-18). Gedaliah appointed governor of Judah (2 Kings 25:22-26). Jeremiah taken to Egypt.
538 BC	Babylon falls to the Medes and Persians

The chapters and messages in this book are not arranged in chronological order. Chapters 35 and 36, for instance, are earlier in point of time than chapter 21.

DETAILED OUTLINE OF JEREMIAH

Jeremiah 1:1-19:	INTRODUCTION - JEREMIAH COMMISSIONED	
Jeremiah 2:1-20:18:	PROPHECIES TO JUDAH, GENERAL AND UNDATED	
First message		2:1-3:5
Second message		3:6-6:30
Third message (at Temple gate)		7:1-10:25
Fourth message (the broken covenant)		11:1-12:17
Fifth message (sign of linen girdle)		13:1-27
Sixth message (on the drought)		14:1-15:21
Seventh message (sign of the unmarried prophet)		16:1-17:18)
Eighth message (at city gates)		17:19-27
Ninth message (the potter's vessel)		18
Tenth message (the earthen vessel)		19:1-15
Result		20:1-18
Jeremiah 21:1-39:18:	PROPHECIES TO JUDAH, PARTICULAR AND DATED	
First (to Zedekiah)		21:1-23:40
Second (after first deportation)		24:1-10
Third (fourth year of Jehoiakim: the coming Babylonian captivity)		25
Third (early reign of Jehoiakim)		26
Fourth (early reign of Jehoiakim)		27-28
Fifth (to captives of first deportation)		29-31
Sixth (tenth year Zedekiah)		32-33
Seventh (during Babylonian siege)		34
Eighth (days of Jehoiakim)		35
Ninth (fourth year Jehoiakim)		36
Tenth (siege)		37
Result		38-39
Jeremiah 40:1-44:30:	PROPHECIES TO JUDAH AFTER FALL OF JERUSALEM	
Babylonian kindly treatment of Jeremiah		40:1-6
Ill-doings in land of Judaea		40:7-41:18
Jeremiah's message to remnant in the land		42
Jeremiah carried down to Egypt		43:1-7
First prophetic message in Egypt		43:8-13
Second prophetic message to Jewish refugees in Egypt		44:1-30
Result - further rejection of the message by Jewish refugees.		
Jeremiah 45:1-51:64:	PROPHECIES UPON NINE GENTILE NATIONS	
A prefatory note to Baruch the faithful scribe who wrote them		45
First (against Egypt)		46
Second, (against the Philistines)		47
Third (against Moab)		48
Fourth (against the Ammonites)		49:1-6
Fifth (against Edom)		49:7-22
Sixth (against Damascus)		49:23-27
Seventh (against Kedar and Hazor)		49:28-33
Eighth (against Elam)		49:34-39
Ninth (against Babylon and Chaldea)		50:1-51:64
Jeremiah 52:1-34:	SUPPLEMENT/CONCLUSION - Jerusalem overthrown	

BRIEF OUTLINE OF JEREMIAH

Jeremiah 1:1-38:28	Given to Judah before the fall, but they are not in chronological order.
Jeremiah 39:1-18	Fall of Jerusalem. (Most important event in the book)
Jeremiah 40-44	Address Judah after the fall.
Jeremiah 45:1-5	Message to Baruch.
Jeremiah 46:1-51:64	To the Gentile nations.
Jeremiah 52:1-34	A historical supplement.

J. Sidlow Baxter sums up the book with two phrases:

The first phrase is "I will punish."

- Jeremiah 9:25 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised;
- Jeremiah 11:22 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will punish them: the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine:
- Jeremiah 21:14 But I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, saith the LORD: and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and it shall devour all things round about it.
- Jeremiah 25:12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.
- Jeremiah 29:32 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the LORD; because he hath taught rebellion against the LORD.
- Jeremiah 30:20 Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them.
- Jeremiah 36:31 And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.
- Jeremiah 44:13 For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence:
- Jeremiah 44:29 And this shall be a sign unto you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil:
- Jeremiah 46:25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the multitude of No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods, and their kings; even Pharaoh, and all them that trust in him:
- Jeremiah 50:18 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.
- Jeremiah 51:44 And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.

The second phrase is "I will restore":

- Jeremiah 30:17 For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.

Jeremiah 26:12, 13 sums up God's clear and gracious "eleventh-hour offer" to Judah, an offer which was obviously rejected.

- 12 Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard.
- 13 Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

JEREMIAH 30 -33 IS, IN MANY WAYS, THE HEART OF THIS BOOK, BUT THE FIRST TWO OF THESE CHAPTERS WERE SPECIFICALLY TOLD TO BE WRITTEN DOWN.

"UNTIL all the writings of the prophet were compiled in one book as we now have it, Jeremiah 30-31 formed a distinct prophecy, and was doubtless in circulation amongst the people in a separate prophetic book; and in Jer 30:2 we read that it is a "book" dictated by God Himself. The subject, then, with which it deals must be one concerning which He is especially anxious to reveal His thoughts. Whatever man may think of it, He considers this matter of immense importance, so that every word must be preserved."

David Baron, The Jewish Problem, https://www.preceptaustin.org/the_jewish_problem-david_baron

JEREMIAH IS COMMANDED TO WRITE THESE WORDS IN A BOOK

Jeremiah 30: 1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,
2 Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book.
3 For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.
4 And these are the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

THE CONTENT OF THIS BOOK (CHAPTERS 30-31) ARE SPECIFICALLY WRITTEN TO THE GENTILES.

Jeremiah 31: 7 For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.
8 Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.
9 They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.
10 Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.

THE FALL OF JERUSALEM IN 586 B.C. IS THE FULCRUM OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH. JERUSALEM IS MENTIONED IN 99 VERSES IN THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BOOK MENTIONS JERUSALEM

Jeremiah 1:3 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.

THE END OF THE BOOK IS ABOUT JERUSALEM

Jeremiah 52:5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.
6 And in the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.
7 Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans were by the city round about:) and they went by the way of the plain.

THE FUTURE THRONE OF THE LORD IN JERUSALEM

Jeremiah 3:17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.

JERUSALEM DESTROYED

Jeremiah 35:17 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

- Jeremiah 39:8 And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.
- 9 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to him, with the rest of the people that remained.
- 10 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.

RETURN TO JERUSALEM

- Jeremiah 29:4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon;
- Jeremiah 29:10 For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.
- 2 Chronicles 36:14 Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.
- 15 And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place.
- 16 But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.
- 17 Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.
- 18 And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.
- 19 And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.
- 20 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:
- 21 To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

MESSIANIC KING RULES IN JERUSALEM

- Jeremiah 23:5 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.
- 6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and **this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**
- Jeremiah 33:15 In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.
- 16 In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and **this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.**
- Jeremiah 25:29 For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts.

"This is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness.—It will be noticed that, while this reproduces the language of Jeremiah 23:6, it does so with a remarkable difference. There the title, "The Lord our Righteousness," is given to the future King, and the passage has accordingly been used as a proof of the full divinity of the Christ, who is that King. Here it is given to the city, and, so given, can only mean that that name will be, as it were, the motto and watchword of her being. She will be a city marked by a righteousness which will be the gift of Jehovah; He will inscribe that name on her banners, and, grave it on her portals. It is obvious that this throws light on the meaning of the title as applied to the King."

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Jeremiah, <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/ebc/jeremiah-33.html#16>