

**JEREMIAH ~ I**

**(CHAPTERS 1-29)**

**THE  
PREACHER'S  
OUTLINE & SERMON  
BIBLE®**

**OLD TESTAMENT**

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**KING JAMES VERSION**



**Leadership Ministries Worldwide  
Chattanooga, TN**

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 96-75921  
ISBN Softbound Edition: 1-57407-220-X  
ISBN Deluxe 3-Ring Edition: 1-57407-221-8

Printed in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 06 07 08 09 10



## DEDICATED

To all the men and women of the world who  
preach and teach the Gospel of  
our Lord Jesus Christ and  
to the Mercy and Grace of God

&

- Demonstrated to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*“In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” (Ep.1:7)*

- Out of the mercy and grace of God, His Word has flowed. Let every person know that God will have mercy upon him, forgiving and using him to fulfill His glorious plan of salvation.

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” (Jn.3:16-17)*

*“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Ti.2:3-4)*

## The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible®

is written for God's servants to use in their study, teaching, and preaching of God's Holy Word...

- to share the Word of God with the world.
- to help the believer, both minister and layman alike, in his understanding, preaching, and teaching of God's Word.
- to do everything we possibly can to lead men, women, boys and girls to give their hearts and lives to Jesus Christ and to secure the eternal life which He offers.
- to do all we can to minister to the needy of the world.
- to give Jesus Christ His proper place, the place the Word gives Him. Therefore, no work of Leadership Ministries Worldwide will ever be personalized.

# THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

**AUTHOR:** Jeremiah. According to the text itself, Jeremiah is the author. He received the prophecies directly from the LORD (1:1-4), and Baruch, his secretary, recorded them.

There is external support for Jeremiah's authorship as well. Daniel, a contemporary of Jeremiah, names him as author (Da.9:2; see Je.25:11-14; 29:10). So do the Jewish Talmud, the Jewish historian Josephus (in *Antiquities*, X.5.1), and the book of *Ecclesiasticus* (a part of the Apocrypha, 49:6, 7). The New Testament refers directly or indirectly to Jeremiah's prophecies numerous times (Mt.2:17-18; 21:13; Mk.11:17; Lu.19:4; Ro.11:27; He.8:8-13). In addition, the field of archaeology offers linguistic and historical support via the *Lachish letters* (dating from around 588 B.C.).

Conservative scholars agree that Jeremiah wrote the book, with the possible exception of chapter 52 (discussion to follow). Although there was no serious debate for centuries, dispute has arisen since the publication of Wellhausen's *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel* in 1878.<sup>1</sup> In his book, Wellhausen critically questioned the authorship of the Pentateuch and sought to identify its sources. His method of "source-critical analysis" has since been applied to other Old Testament books with the same results—a questioning of traditional authorship.

Scholars are generally divided among two groups:

1. Those who argue that Jeremiah wrote very little of the book. They identify three chief sources of its content...
  - a. messages dictated by Jeremiah to Baruch
  - b. a biography of Jeremiah written by Baruch
  - c. various contributions from later editors and writers
2. Those who hold that Jeremiah authored the entire book (ch.52 excepted) and dictated his messages to Baruch (36:17-18; 45:1). Jeremiah and/or Baruch then arranged and edited the book while exiled in Egypt (see outline and notes, 42:1-43:13).

Debate arises primarily from the different types of literature—styles of writing and content—found in *Jeremiah*. These are (1) prophecies, written poetically, believed to be from Jeremiah himself; (2) prose (non-poetic) narratives that are biographical, concerning Jeremiah and the events of his day; and (3) prose discussions similar in style and vocabulary to the Historical Books of the Bible, particularly *Deuteronomy*.

Because of this similarity, some argue that later contributions were made to *Jeremiah* by "Deuteronomic" editors (those writing in the style of *Deuteronomy*); even to its theology. Though some similarities exist, many scholars are not convinced. It is just as likely that Jeremiah was simply influenced by the style of *Deuteronomy* and the Historical Books, as was much of the literature of his day. In fact, scholars agree that he likely heard parts of *Deuteronomy* read aloud during the reforms of Josiah.

There are significant differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts of *Jeremiah* (Masoretic Text—MT—as compared to the Greek Septuagint—LXX). These include omissions and additions as well as different arrangements of text. The Greek text is approximately one-seventh to one-eighth shorter than the Hebrew. Some differences may be due errors in transcription (i.e., copy). Other differences suggest more than one version of the Hebrew text. Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholars think it possible there were at least two different Hebrew versions already in use at Qumran (the location of the Dead Sea Scrolls)—the shorter version acting as basis for the Greek, and the longer version as basis for the Hebrew.

It should be remembered, as we learn from the book of *Jeremiah* itself, that King Jehoiakim angrily cut Jeremiah's original scroll into pieces and burned it (36:1-32). Subsequently, God commanded that the prophecies be rewritten (36:32). The text itself states that many words were added (36:32). This perhaps accounts for many of the differences between the Hebrew and Greek editions. G.L. Archer, Jr., in *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, proposes that Jeremiah continued to add to his work after writing and circulating an earlier version of it. His total works were then arranged and edited by Baruch and it was this final text that formed the longer MT (Masoretic Text).<sup>2</sup>

As noted earlier, scholars consider chapter 52 not to be original to *Jeremiah* as it is identical to 2 Kings 24:18-25:30. It could, however, have been added at his direction, particularly if he lived to be 85 to 90 years old as some scholars believe. It is likely that he or Baruch added it as proof that Jeremiah's prophecies had indeed come to pass—since it describes the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar.

To help us keep perspective among all these theories of authorship, S. Soderlund has wisely cautioned: "It is important not to lose one's perspective: whether in the longer or shorter version, the book of *Jeremiah* still speaks to us with power and conviction that should not be obscured in the course of an otherwise legitimate and necessary text critical enterprise."<sup>3</sup>

The point of not losing perspective is well advised. Since we have substantial internal and external evidence to support Jeremiah as the writer, the arguments for multiple authors and later changes seem "highly subjective and inconclusive."<sup>4</sup> Indeed, there is more than enough evidence to support the authorship of *Jeremiah*, and no satisfactory reasons to doubt it.

The believer today, when reading *Jeremiah*, can be confident that what he or she reads is beyond a doubt the living Word of God. Just as Jeremiah pleaded with the people of Judah to listen to the voice of God—repent and be saved—so we are compelled in our own day to take the Word of God at its face value. We must believe what the Holy Bible says and listen to the voice of God.

## LIFE AND MINISTRY

Jeremiah was born in Anathoth (1:1), two to three miles northeast of Jerusalem. His father was Hilkiah, a priest (1:1). His ministry extended from around 626 to 586 B.C. and coincided with the reigns of Judah's last five kings: Josiah (640-609 B.C.), Jehoahaz (609), Jehoiakim (608-598), Jehoiachin (598-597), and Zedekiah (597-586). His contemporaries included the prophets Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Ezekiel (in Babylon), and perhaps Obadiah.

<sup>1</sup> J. Wellhausen. *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*. (Cleveland, OH: World, 1957).

<sup>2</sup> G.L. Archer, Jr. *A Survey of the Old Testament Introduction*. (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1974), pp.349-350.

<sup>3</sup> S. Soderlund. *The Greek Text of Jeremiah: A Revised Hypothesis*, JSOTSup 47. (Sheffield: JSOT, 1985), pp.127-128.

<sup>4</sup> Charles L. Feinberg. *Jeremiah*. "The Expositor's Bible Commentary," Vol. 6. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), p.362.

## INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH

The name Jeremiah (in Hebrew *Yirmeyahu* or *Yirmeyah*) literally means *YAHWEH throws*, perhaps in the sense of laying a foundation. *Jeremiah* may therefore mean, *The LORD exalts* or *The LORD establishes*. It might also mean *The LORD throws* or *hurls*, as in the *hurling* of the prophet into chaotic times or *throwing down* nations in judgment for their sins.

For 40 years Jeremiah was the lone voice of God to the nation of Judah. He passionately pleaded with his people to repent of their sins and rebellion or else face the judgment of God. Yet, despite all of his steadfast efforts and fervent pleas, no one listened.

Jeremiah was also opposed throughout his life and ministry, rejected by his family (12:6), his neighbors (11:19-21), false prophets and priests (20:1-2; 28:1-17), his friends (20:10), his audience (26:8), and the kings of Judah (36:23). He was impoverished, imprisoned, and deprived (ch.37). He was thrown into a cistern (ch.38). His life was threatened. His life's work was cut to pieces and burned (ch.36). And finally, after 40 years of preaching to no avail—failing to turn the hearts of his people back to God—he witnessed the total destruction of his beloved nation. On top of all this, his ministry ended by his being taken captive and forcefully exiled to Egypt (ch.43).

Still, in the face of these endless hardships, all the apparent failures and disappointments Jeremiah faithfully proclaimed God's Word. Despite the enormous personal cost, he remained steadfast to the end of his life. He therefore stands as a stalwart example to ministers throughout the ages.

Jeremiah's entire life was an object lesson and example. God forbade him to marry or raise children because of the imminent threat of judgment on Judah (16:1-4). He had few friends, and his closest companion was Baruch, his faithful secretary. Because he frequently described the anguish of his heart, Jeremiah has been called "the weeping prophet" (4:19; 9:1; 10:19-20; 11:18-23; 12:1-4; 15:10-21; 17:12-18; 18:18-23; 20:7-18; 23:9). However, this was not a sign of weakness in the least. His anguish arose from the strength of his love for his people, his devotion to God, his commitment to the justice and righteousness of God, and his unyielding desire to obey God's Word. His was a burden truly requiring the strength of a "fortified city," a "bronze wall," and an "iron pillar" (1:18).

Prone to self-analysis and self-criticism (10:24), Jeremiah is considered one of the most personally revealing of all the prophets. He was timid by nature (1:6), yet boldly preached God's wrath toward sin. He loved and constantly prayed for his people, yet could scathingly rebuke them and the leaders of his day. He wept and agonized over their rebellious and hardened hearts, yet could passionately plead for God to avenge his enemies (12:1-3; 15:15; 17:18; 18:19-23). He even boldly expressed his frustration with God in such passages as 12:1-4 and 15:18.

Nevertheless, through all the self-doubt, all the opposition and trials, the LORD frequently reassured Jeremiah of the special call on his life, *and* of His divine protection and presence (1:4-19; 6:27; 15:20; 20:7-18). This undeniable call (1:4-10; 3:12; 7:2, 27-28) and God's frequent affirmations of the call (11:2,6; 13:12-13; 17:19-20) surely served as a source of great strength for Jeremiah. What further sustained him? He held tightly to an *unrelenting confidence* in the promises of God. He *believed* the LORD, regardless of his circumstances. No matter how bad things looked at the time, Jeremiah trusted the LORD to fulfill His Word.

As a result, Jeremiah is considered one of Scripture's foremost examples of *faithfulness* and *obedience*—especially in the midst of *constant persecution*. Utterly obedient to the LORD's call on his life, he faithfully proclaimed God's message regardless of inner or outer struggles. As one of the Old Testament's greatest prophets, his message is as timely today as it was in his own day. People of every generation—all servants of the LORD—should continually examine their hearts in light of Jeremiah's message, seeking the *renewal* that comes from true *repentance*.

**DATE:** 626 to 586 B.C. As the book itself states, Jeremiah began writing in the thirteenth year of King Josiah's reign, which would be 626 or 627 B.C. Prophecies and other content were added throughout Jeremiah's ministry, ending sometime after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. We also learn from the text that God commanded that the book be rewritten after the original scroll was burned by Jehoiakim. According to 36:32, additional words were also added at this time (chs.36-38). It is likely that Jeremiah and Baruch, his scribe, edited the work during the Babylonian Captivity sometime after 586 B.C.

**TO WHOM WRITTEN:** the Southern Kingdom of Judah and its capital city Jerusalem in particular. It also contains prophecies to several other nations including Egypt and Babylon (see chs.46-51). Of course the book is also applicable to all nations and people in general...

- to give an example and warning to us

**“Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Cor.10:11)**

- to teach us how to live

**“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope” (Ro.15:4)**

### **PURPOSE:**

1. The *Historical Purpose*: to arouse the people of Judah to repent of their sins and to warn them of coming judgment. To turn the hearts of God's children—His beloved sons and daughters—away from lifeless idols and back to Himself, their loving Creator.

The prophecies of Jeremiah contain God's final warnings to Judah just prior to the fall of Jerusalem (and exile to Babylon). If Judah did not repent, the nation would be utterly destroyed. Despite the LORD's enduring patience and His longing to show His people mercy, their sin had become too ingrained and their hearts too hard to heed God's warning. Nevertheless, through Jeremiah, God urgently and fervently pled with His people *one last time* to repent of their sin. If they would only repent, turn back to His loving care, judgment could be avoided.

## INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH

To understand the book's historical purpose—its immediate relevance to Judah—it is helpful to understand the tumultuous times in which Jeremiah lived:

- Jeremiah lived in turbulent times both politically and militarily: Israel, Judah, and the Middle East were all undergoing monumental change. Israel, the Northern Kingdom, had already been conquered by Assyria and exiled. However, a new world stage was being set, as there were upheavals in the alliances of nations and of the world's superpowers. The key players were Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. Babylon was gaining power and would, in Jeremiah's day, defeat both Assyria and Egypt to dominate the region. It was Babylon, not Assyria, that would inflict the final judgment of God upon Judah.

This timeline from *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* offers a succinct overview of key events:<sup>5</sup>

626 B.C.	Call of Jeremiah
612 B.C.	Fall of Nineveh (Assyrian capital)
609 B.C.	Death of King Josiah (at Megiddo)
605 B.C.	Fall of Assyrian Empire
605 B.C.	First siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel exiled to Babylon)
597 B.C.	Second siege of Jerusalem
588–586 B.C.	Final siege of Jerusalem (and the Babylonian Captivity)

- Jeremiah lived in turbulent times socially, ethically, and morally. Judah's sin and rebellion had become all-pervasive: Judah had been thoroughly corrupted by the evil reign of King Manasseh and then only outwardly affected by the reforms of King Josiah. The people had failed to sincerely repent and turn back to God. They are described as completely *apostate* and *backslidden*, utterly depraved and immoral, even *excelling in* and *wise in doing evil*. They were guilty of numerous and horrific sins, among them: idolatry, insincere worship, injustice, sexual immorality (including temple prostitution), and even child sacrifice.

That these sins were denounced by Jeremiah so fervently and for so long (over forty years), and that the warnings and judgments pronounced were so harsh suggest that these sins were not occasional or being committed by only a few. Rather, such sin had become the norm and the predominant trend of society. As chapters five and six reveal, not one righteous person could be found in all of Jerusalem.

This forms the background for the writings and prophecies of *Jeremiah*. These prophecies sought to bring about Judah's repentance through several key messages:

- First, were specific indictments (charges) against the people's numerous and gross sins (2:1–3:5; 5:1–31; 7:1–8:3; 8:4–22; 9:1–26), and their breaking of the covenant God had established (11:1–12:6).
  - Second, were direct and impassioned pleas for repentance (3:6–4:4; 18:11–17; 26:1–6).
  - Third, were several reminders that the LORD (YAHWEH, JEHOVAH), *their* God, is the only *true* and *living* God and that, as such, He is LORD over all creation (10:1–25; 27:5). This includes sovereignty—God's absolute rule and control—over nations, governments, and their leaders (12:10–13; 18:1–23). He is sovereign over political and national events, even military campaigns, and He uses nations as agents of His divine judgment (Babylon, 25:1–14). He even controls and uses natural disasters such as famine and drought to chastise and discipline His people (14:1–15:21).
- There were also reminders of Israel's first love for the LORD while in the wilderness with Moses and God's tender pleas for Judah to return to her *first love* (2:1–3).
- Fourth, were stern pronouncements and warnings of judgment if Judah did not repent (4:5–31; 6:1–30; 9:1–26; 12:7–13:27; 19:1–20:18; 21:1–22:30; 25:1–38).
  - Fifth, was the promise of deliverance from the coming judgment—that God would indeed stay His hand and withhold judgment if the people would sincerely repent (4:14–18; 18:1–10).

### 2. The *Doctrinal* or *Spiritual* Purpose:

- First, the LORD God is creator of *all* and rules over all nature, peoples, and nations (see pt.c above). He is intimately and profoundly involved in this world and in the lives of those who trust Him.  
Just think how important this message is to the believer today. No matter how bad things get, no matter how devastating our personal situation may seem, our gracious and all-powerful LORD is in *full* control.
- Second, the LORD God is *loving* and *merciful* and calls His people into a covenant relationship with Himself—a permanent, unbreakable bond. The LORD longs for His people to repent of their sins, to love and be faithful to Him. His Word declares that even when we are unfaithful, He is yet faithful and longs to show mercy (2 Ti.2:13).
- Third, the LORD God is a God of *righteousness* and *justice* and therefore promises to judge sin. In fact, no sin—no idolatry, immorality, injustice, or wickedness—can go unpunished. The justice of a righteous and holy God demands it. The very laws and nature of the universe require that sin be atoned for—that law-breakers be held accountable for their actions, that a price be paid, and justice served.

This should not be surprising to us today. All men and women should ask themselves this crucial question:

*If this world's immoral and corrupt societies utilize judges and courts—a legal system—to punish crime, holding law-breakers accountable for their wrongdoing, how much more should a righteous and holy God hold men accountable?*

<sup>5</sup> Charles L. Feinberg, *Jeremiah*, p.363.

## INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH

Jeremiah proclaimed God's *judgment*. Judgment for all sin and rebellion against God is coming. Beyond a doubt, judgment for sin committed today will be just as certain as it was for Judah in its day. God's Word has declared it. The people of Judah were warned repeatedly of judgment to come yet they did not repent. With their example before us, and the multitude of warnings throughout Scripture, how much more should we repent and turn to the LORD for salvation.

- d. Fourth, the LORD God is *always true* to His Word—all His covenants and promises will be fulfilled. As the Scriptures declare, His Word will not return to Him void, or empty, but will accomplish everything for which He sent it. God's Word will fully achieve His purpose and will.

**“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Is.55:11).**

Recall that God made a covenant with His people Israel through Moses (the Mosaic Covenant). This was a *conditional* covenant requiring that the people obey all of God's laws in order to receive the promised blessings. Therefore, there were two sides to this covenant: faithfulness to God would bring blessing; unfaithfulness would bring the curse of judgment and destruction (see De.27:14–28:68; Le.26:31–33).

The book of *Jeremiah* highlights these clear terms and conditions. The people of Judah had completely rebelled against God and broken their covenant with Him. The curse, which promised judgment in turn for unfaithfulness, was being fulfilled in their midst. The curse for breaking the Law, for repeated transgression and refusal to repent, was being enacted just as God's Word declared. Because the people had become so hardened and refused to repent (even after years of being warned), they were about to face the ultimate judgment—the destruction of the whole nation, including their beloved capital Jerusalem and the LORD's Holy Temple. However, this was not the end of the story for God's people.

- e. Fifth, the LORD God is a God who offers *hope* despite the necessity of judgment and the people's rebellion. The LORD promises renewal and restoration after judgment. Thus, Jeremiah's message—in spite of all its gloom and doom—still contained a strong message of hope: a righteous remnant of Israel would be restored. God promised to bring His people back from exile and captivity to restore them to blessing (30:18–31:6).
  - f. Sixth, the LORD God is a God who indeed *saves* and *restores*—just as He promised. As His Word says and as He promises so He does. Therefore, judgment is not the final act. God promised not only to renew and restore Israel to blessing, but also to put in place a *new covenant*, one that would replace and outshine the old (see Hebrews chs.8–10). As one commentator put it, “Mercy and covenant faithfulness would triumph over wrath.”<sup>6</sup>
3. The *Christological* or *Christ-Centered* Purpose: there are several references to Christ in *Jeremiah* and perhaps one of the most profound statements of the New Covenant in all of Scripture. *The Christological purposes are...*
    - a. To declare the promise of the New Covenant in Christ, which is God's law written on our hearts and in our minds (31:31–34).

**Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Je.31:31–34).**

These verses make a profound statement about the New Covenant, revealing the radical difference between it and the Old or Mosaic Covenant (based on the Law). The Old Covenant was *conditional*, *dependent* on the obedience of the people—an obedience never to be achieved. The New Covenant is a covenant of *unconditional* grace and mercy—its terms fully achieved in Christ. It is based firmly in the *work of* Christ on the cross. The Old Covenant was written on stone tablets. The New Covenant, however, writes God's laws on our hearts and in our minds.

Even greater than God's law written on our hearts, we have God's very Spirit living within us—the Spirit of Christ—who lives the life of Christ in us and through us. The New Covenant includes the great gift of the *life* and *power* of Christ (resurrection power), which is now offered freely to all who trust and follow Him.

*How great is our God* who, knowing our weakness—our inability to obey His Law and to meet the terms of the covenant—stooped ever so low, descending to us through His Son, to fulfill the terms of the covenant *for us* (see *Philippians* 2; *Colossians* 1; *Ephesians* 1). *How great is our God* who offers us a New Covenant of grace, firmly established in the death and resurrection of His Son, a covenant established *forever* in the shed blood of our Lord, who died and gave Himself for us.

- b. To declare the promised Messiah (the coming of Jesus Christ) who is the LORD our Righteousness (33:14–26).

**“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. 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 right-**

<sup>6</sup> Zondervan NIV Study Bible (Fully Revised). (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2002). Notes from the Introduction to *Jeremiah*.

## INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH

**eousness in the land. 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. For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel” (33:14-17).**

What a wonderful promise and further proof that God always fulfills His Word. These verses foretell the coming of Christ as the perfect and righteous Son of the Father, the one who will meet all the requirements of the Law. Jesus came to this earth and lived a sinless life, a life of perfect obedience to the will of His Father. Therefore, the Law given to Moses has been perfectly kept; and the covenant given to Moses has been perfectly fulfilled—all through Christ. Christ therefore *is* our righteousness. For all who believe in Him, just as with Abraham, their faith is credited to them as righteousness (see Ro.4:9). God’s Word assures us that all who believe in Jesus as Lord will indeed share in His righteousness.

- c. To declare the eternal “Throne of the LORD” that will be established in Jerusalem (3:14-17). Christ’s throne, and His eternal presence among His people, will replace and surpass in glory the former Ark of the Covenant. This is a wonderful picture of the eternal rule and presence of Christ. He will unite Judah and Israel and all of God’s children to live forever in peace and safety with the LORD. Jerusalem will be restored, and Christ will reign from there eternally.
- d. To pronounce the coming of Christ, the “Righteous Branch of David,” a King who will “reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth” (23:5-8).

There are several other references to Christ: He is the fountain of living waters (2:13; see John 4:14); the balm of Gilead (8:22); the good Shepherd (23:4); and as noted, the LORD Our Righteousness (23:6; 33:16).

### SPECIAL FEATURES:

1. *Jeremiah* is “A great book showing the absolute and total call of the LORD upon a person’s life” (1:4-19). The LORD calls and appoints servants for His purposes...
  - It is God who calls a person to do His will and to declare His Word. The call is clear and it demands that we *give our all*—our mind, body, and soul—just as Jeremiah did (1:4-19).
  - God’s call demands courage and faithfulness—even at the risk of great personal cost: persecution, opposition, physical or emotional suffering, or even loss of life (1:4-19; 26:1-29:32; 37:11-16; 38:1-13).
  - It is God who equips, strengthens, and empowers a person to do His will and to declare His Word (1:5-10; 1:17-19).
2. *Jeremiah* is “The great book pronouncing God’s indictment (legal charges) against His people” (2:1–3:5). The LORD levels the following charges against the people and leaders of Judah...
  - the charge of backsliding (3:11–4:4).
  - the charge of total depravity, which included the sins of perjury, refusal of discipline, hard-heartedness, ignorance of God’s Law, corruption of the leaders, apostasy, forsaking God, adultery, unfaithfulness, denial of God’s Word, persecution of God’s prophets, and spiritual blindness and deafness (5:1-31).
  - the charge of insincere and hypocritical worship (7:1–8:3).
  - the charge of false prophecy and teaching (8:4-22).
  - the charge of corruption within society (9:1-26).
  - the charge of idolatry (10:1-25). Judah was guilty of worshipping several false gods from surrounding nations—Baal, Moloch (or Molech), and Ishtar (Queen of Heaven). They even placed images of these idols in the temple (7:31; 19:5; 32:34-35; 44:18-19). Note also that the people were guilty of gross immorality. Pervasive throughout the land were moral corruption, sexual immorality, adultery, lust, temple prostitution, and even child sacrifice. When people are living only for themselves and their immediate gratification, widespread social injustice almost always exists. The people were guilty of neglecting, oppressing, and exploiting the poor—widows and orphans, and the defenseless in general. Such is commonplace when a society becomes rampant with personal indulgence and greed (5:1-9; 7:1-11; 23:10-14)
  - the charge of breaking God’s covenant (11:1–12:6)
  - the charge of sins against the human heart: idolatry, greed, trusting in the strength of man versus God, forsaking God, persecuting His prophets, and breaking the Sabbath (17:1-27)
  - the charge against the sins of Judah’s kings (21:1–22:30)
  - the charge against the sins of civil and religious leaders (23:1-40)
3. *Jeremiah* is “The great book proclaiming the need for total and sincere repentance” (3:6–4:4; 18:11-17; 26:1-6).
4. *Jeremiah* is “The great book proclaiming the absolute certainty and terror of God’s judgment.” It clearly and vividly describes the consequences of sin—God’s certain judgment...
  - the judgment and example of Israel (3:6-10)
  - the judgment of Judah (3:6–6:30)
  - the terrifying day of God’s judgment (4:5-31)
  - the certainty of coming judgment (6:1-30)
  - the judgment of kings (21:1–22:30)
  - the judgment of corrupt religious leaders, false prophets and teachers (23:1-40)
  - the length and severity of judgment; seventy years (25:1-38)
  - the judgment of the nations of the world (46:1–51:64)

## INTRODUCTION TO JEREMIAH

5. *Jeremiah* is “The great book revealing God’s hatred of hypocritical and insincere worship.” Jeremiah vividly describes Judah’s heartless and hypocritical faith: their worship of God while still worshiping idols, their attending to the outward signs of religion (e.g., sacrifice, temple rituals, and church attendance) *without* living repentant and obedient lives.
6. *Jeremiah* is “The great book exposing the dangers and judgment of false teachers” (23:1-40).
7. *Jeremiah* is “A great book depicting the indisputable difference between false gods and the true and living God—Creator and LORD over all” (10:1-25).
8. *Jeremiah* is “A great book exposing the sins and depravity of the human heart” (17:1-27).
9. *Jeremiah* is “The great book describing the inner struggles and personal trials of a great man of faith—a steadfast servant of God” (14:7–15:21).
10. *Jeremiah* is “A great book showing a life of total faithfulness in the midst of hardship, opposition, persecution, and the threat of death (11:18-23; 16:1-9; 20:1-6; 26:1–29:32; 37:11-16; 38:1-13; 52:1-34).
11. *Jeremiah* is “A great book that proclaims the sovereign power of God.” It clearly shows that the LORD controls and rules over the natural world and nations. He is active and engaged in all His creation...
  - God is Creator and LORD over all creation, the only true and living God (10:12-16; 27:5; 51:15-19). His majesty is contrasted with lifeless and worthless idols (10:1-25; see also 14:22).
  - God controls nature and uses natural events for His purposes—even to chastise and discipline His children in the hope they will return to Him. This can be seen in His sending drought and famine to Judah (14:1–15:21).
  - God is involved in national and world events, even the rise and fall of entire kingdoms (12:10-13; 18:1-23; 25:1-14; 46:1–51:64). The LORD uses nations and appoints leaders according to His purposes and ends (e.g., Nebuchadnezzar). He frequently uses national crises (such as Babylon’s attack on Judah) to discipline and judge His people.
12. *Jeremiah* is “A great book of comfort and hope to God’s people.” It proclaims the promise of a *remnant*: a small number of people who would truly trust the LORD and be restored and renewed after God’s judgment fell upon the nation. It eloquently describes Israel’s eventual restoration and renewal, and paints a beautiful picture of reconciliation between the LORD and His backslidden children (30:1–33:26).
13. *Jeremiah* is “The great book proclaiming the unconditional gift of the New Covenant: a picture of regeneration and of being given a new heart” (31:31-40). Jeremiah gives a clear illustration of the New Covenant to come in Christ. God’s laws and love will be written on the hearts of His people—all those who believe and accept His Son Jesus Christ. Because of this New Covenant, Christ, through the Holy Spirit, now lives in us and through us (see Ro.8; Ga.2:20). This is the New Covenant of *unconditional grace*, and its theme will be picked up and expanded on throughout the entire New Testament. Its importance cannot be overstated.
14. *Jeremiah* is “A great book on the unchangeable and total fulfillment of God’s Word.” God promises throughout the book of *Jeremiah* to fulfill His Word. God’s Word is always fulfilled—despite apparent delays. This can be seen in the short term fulfillments of Jeremiah’s prophecies (e.g., 16:15; 20:4; 25:11-14; 27:19-22; 29:10; 34:4-5; 43:10-11; 44:30; 46:13) as well as those of longer term (e.g., 23:5-6; 30:8-9; 31:31-34; 33:15-16) and in the fall and destruction of Jerusalem (39:1-18; 52:1-34). Of course, the promises of the coming Messiah have also been fulfilled.
15. *Jeremiah* is “The great book describing the fall and destruction of Jerusalem.” Chapter 52 reveals the ultimate fulfillment of God’s Word and warnings to Judah. It graphically depicts the complete destruction of the city (including the burning of the temple) and the total devastation of Judah as a nation (39:1-18; 52:1-34). All of this happened just as God said that it would, through His servant Jeremiah.
16. *Jeremiah* is “A great book describing God’s expectations for, and impending judgment of, the nations of the world” (46:1–51:64).
17. *Jeremiah* is “The great book showing the unbreakable relationship between God’s *justice* and His *mercy*.” God’s justice requires that all sin be punished. Yet God longs to forgive and show mercy; thus He pleads with His people to turn away from their sin and to live lives of righteousness and faithfulness to Him. The book of *Jeremiah* clearly demonstrates this everlasting relationship between God’s *justice* and *mercy*.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Every child of God is precious to the Lord and deeply loved. And every child as a servant of the Lord touches the lives of those who come in contact with him or his ministry. The writing ministries of the following servants have touched this work, and we are grateful that God brought their writings our way. We hereby acknowledge their ministry to us, being fully aware that there are many others down through the years whose writings have touched our lives and who deserve mention, but whose names have faded from our memory. May our wonderful Lord continue to bless the ministries of these dear servants—and the ministries of us all—as we diligently labor to reach the world for Christ and to meet the desperate needs of those who suffer so much.

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