

The Prophecies of Jeremiah

A Self-Study Guide

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Goals of the lesson:

1. Understand the political and spiritual condition of Judah.
2. Learn about the call of Jeremiah.
3. Recognize the Lord despises sin.

Introduction: The book of Jeremiah is the prophecy of a man divinely called in his youth from the priest-city of Anathoth. Anathoth lies about three miles northeast of Jerusalem. Jeremiah prophesied from 627-580 B.C., a time of major political and social upheaval in Judah. Jeremiah witnessed the uprising of the Babylonian Empire and overthrowing of the Assyrian Empire in 612 B.C. War between Babylon and Egypt followed afterward. Judah became the battlefield for Babylon and Egypt to wage their war. During this time Babylon repelled the Egyptian forces and put the nation of Judah under their power. Jerusalem began paying tribute to Babylon and in 606 B.C. the first group of captives were carried away, including the prophet Daniel. In 597 B.C. Judah revolted and Nebuchadnezzar carried a second group into captivity, including the prophet Ezekiel. Again Judah revolted and in 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar came in to Judah and destroyed Jerusalem.

Jeremiah lived during corrupt times in Judah. Idolatry was rampant and pagan rites corrupted the worship of God at the altars of the Temple. The gallant effort of Josiah to bring about a reformation in the land did not have any effect on the hearts of the people. Stealing, murder, adultery, and lying were common place in the land. Yet while the people were corrupt, they never ceased to perform the outward acts of worship to God. But the sacrifices of the people were nothing more than mechanical ritual. Because the people were involved in these sins, there was room for only one of two outcomes: radical repentance on a national level, or divine judgment executed on a rebellious, disobedient nation. The book of Jeremiah unveils which of these two paths the nation chose to take.

Notice the reigns of the kings that Jeremiah prophesied under and use these for future reference:

Josiah 640-608, Jehoahaz 608, Jehoiakim 608-607, Jehoiachin 597, Zedekiah 597-586.

Special Note:

Because the intent of this booklet is to survey the major prophets, the lesson material will not cover each chapter of the book in detail. Instead, the lesson will have the student survey the theme of the chapters and then in-depth study will be placed on selected texts in Jeremiah that are important and/or give an good representation for the chapter. Though not every passage will be covered in-depth in this study, the student is encouraged to study the whole book of Jeremiah.

***Selected In-Depth Text:* 1:1-19 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

Life Application:

1. Read Hebrews 13:5-6. Compare the assurance that God gives us with the assurance that Jeremiah is given. What does this mean to you?
2. What is God's warning to Jeremiah in verse 17?

Selected In-Depth Text: 2:1-37 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

3. Explain the imagery found in 2:10-11.

4. Explain the imagery found in 2:13.

Life Application:

5. What applications to our lives can we make from the images found in 2:13?

6. Explain the phrase in 2:20, "On every high hill and under every green tree you sprawled and played the whore." (NRSV)

7. What is being said of the people in the picture given in 2:23-24?

8. Explain the imagery in 2:27-28.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. "Do not break down before them, or I will break you before them." (1:17)
2. "Who say to a tree, 'You are my father,'" (2:27)

3:1-5:31

JEREMIAH

Lesson 2

Goals of the lesson:

1. Visualize the images depicting judgment upon Judah.
2. Note the sins of Judah.
3. Notice the stubborn will of the people unwilling to turn back to the Lord.

Selected In-Depth Text: **3:1-14** In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

1. Explain the meaning of the phrase found in 3:2, "By the waysides you have sat waiting for lovers, like a nomad in the wilderness." (NRSV)

2. Explain the phrase in 3:3, "yet you have the forehead of a whore." (NRSV)

3. Notice 3:7-10.

- a. Explain the images the Lord is making by comparing Israel and Judah.

Life Application:

- b. What application can we learn from the Lord's comparison of Israel and Judah?

3:15-25 Write down the main point in this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **4:1-10 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

4. What is Jeremiah telling the people to do in 4:5-6?

5. Explain Jeremiah's accusation against God in 4:10.

Selected In-Depth Text: **4:11-31 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

6. Explain the images depicted in 4:29-31.

Selected In-Depth Text: 5:1-13 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

7. Notice 5:12-13.

a. What were the false prophets and people of Judah declaring?

b. What application can we make to ourselves and to the church from this passage?

5:14-31 Write down the main point of the passage.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. "Faithless Israel has shown herself less guilty than false Judah." (3:11)
2. "This is your doom; how bitter it is!" (4:18)

Goals of the lesson:

1. Notice the Lord's call to repentance.
2. Visualize the horror of the coming invasion.

6:1-10 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **6:11-15 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

Life Application:

1. Consider from this passage the sins the people were committing and their consequences.
What lesson is this to you and to the nation we live in?

6:16-30 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **7:1-15 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

2. Explain what is meant in 7:4 by the lying words, "This is the temple of the Lord."

3. What happened to Shiloh?

7:16-29 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: 7:30-8:3 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

(special note for 8:1-2: In search of valuables, the Babylonians would open the graves of the leading citizens and scatter their bones across the face of the ground.)

4. Looking at 7:31, what is the importance of Topheth and the valley of the son of Hinnom and where are they located?

Life Application:

5. What personal applications can you find from chapters 6-8?

8:4-22 Write down the main point of this passage.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. "Death shall be preferred to life." (8:3)
2. "Amend your ways and your doings..." (7:3)

9:1-11:23

JEREMIAH

Lesson 4

Goals of the lesson:

1. Notice the supremacy of God over idols.
2. See the coming exile of the people and the threatened life of Jeremiah.

9:1-9 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: 9:10-16 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

1. What does it mean that the Lord is feeding the people wormwood and poisonous waters to drink in 9:15?

Selected In-Depth Text: 9:17-26 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

Life Application:

2. What application can you make from 9:23-24?

3. Explain 9:25-26.

10:1-10 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: 10:11-25 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

4. What point is the Lord making in 10:11-16?

5. Notice 10:17-25.
- a. What predictions are being made in this passage?

- b. What attitudes of Jeremiah do you see in this passage?

Life Application:

- c. What application can you make from the attitudes of Jeremiah?

11:1-17 Write down the main point of this passage.

***Selected In-Depth Text: 11:18-23* In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

6. What is Jeremiah describing in 11:18-20? What does Jeremiah ask God for?
7. What personal tie did Jeremiah have to the town of Anathoth? How does this compare to God and his people?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. "Human corpses shall fall like dung upon the open field." (9:22)
2. Jeremiah's life is threatened by the people of Anathoth.

Goals of the lesson:

1. Notice the complaints of Jeremiah and the responses by God.
2. Visualize the imagery of the loincloth and the wine jars.

Selected In-Depth Text: 12:1-13 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

1. What is Jeremiah's complaint to God?
2. Explain God's answer in 12:5-6.

12:14-17 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: 13:1-27 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

3. What point is the Lord making to Jeremiah about the loincloth (sash) in 13:1-11?
4. Explain the parable in 13:12-14.

5. List the five rhetorical questions of 13:20-23 and explain what they mean.

6. Explain 13:26, "I myself will lift up your skirts over your face, and your shame will be seen."
(NRSV)

14:1-22 Write down the main point of this chapter.

15:1-9 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **15:10-21 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

7. What is Jeremiah's laments and complaints in 15:10-18?

8. What is the Lord's answer to Jeremiah in 15:19-21?

Life Application:

9. What applications can you make from this dialogue between Jeremiah and God?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. Can leopards change their spots? (13:23)
2. "I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked." (15:21)

16:1-19:15

JEREMIAH

Lesson 6

Goals of the lesson:

1. See the prophecy of the remnant.
2. Understand the images depicting the power of God and judgment.

Selected In-Depth Text: **16:1-5** In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

1. Consider the difficulty Jeremiah labored under when God gave the order in 16:2. Jeremiah was not the only prophet who had his marital status affected. What did God cause in Ezekiel's marriage? What burden did God lay on Hosea?

16:6-13 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **16:14-21** In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

2. Explain the figure in 16:16.

Selected In-Depth Text: 17:1-4 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

3. What point is the Lord making in this passage about “the sin of Judah is written with an iron pen?”

7:5-13 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: 17:14-18 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

4. Explain the way the people are mocking in 17:15.
5. Notice 17:14-18.
 - a. What is Jeremiah’s prayer?

Life Application:

- b. What applications can we make from the prayer of Jeremiah?

17:19-27 What is the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **18:1-17 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

Life Application:

6. What can we learn from the illustration of the potter and the clay?

7. Explain the phrase in 18:17, "I will show them my back."

18:18-23 What is the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **19:1-15 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

8. Explain the meaning of Lord's comparison between the earthenware jug (flask) and the people of Judah throughout this chapter.

Life Application:

9. Continuing from question 8, can a similar comparison be made to us? How?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. "For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their ancestors." (16:15)
2. "And I will make this city a horror, a thing to be hissed at." (19:8)

20:1-24:10

JEREMIAH

Lesson 7

Goals of the lesson:

1. See the anguish and despair of Jeremiah.
2. Visualize the judgment coming upon the rulers and kings of Judah.
3. Understand the prophecy of the Branch of David.

20:1-6 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **20:7-18 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

1. Explain Jeremiah's feelings in 20:14-18.

Selected In-Depth Text: 21:1-10 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

2. What graphic predictions are being made by Jeremiah in this passage?

21:11-14 Write down the main point of this passage.

22:1-17 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: 22:18-30 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

3. Describe how King Jehoiakim (22:18-23) and King Jehoiachin (also called Coniah 22:24-30) were going to die.

4. a. Christ came through Coniah and sat on the throne of David (Matt. 1:12). How do we explain 22:30 in light of this?

b. How would this prophecy affect those who hold a premillennial doctrine today?

23:1-8 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: 23:9-40 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

Special Note: NRSV renders verse 33 best, "When this people, or a prophet, or a priest asks you, 'What is the burden of the Lord?' you shall say to them, 'You are the burden, and I will cast you off, says the Lord.' "

5. What similarities can be found between the false prophets of Jeremiah's day and the false prophets and teachers today?

6. Why should Jeremiah not mention "the burden of the Lord" anymore in 36-40?

Selected In-Depth Text: 24:1-10 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

7. Explain the vision of the figs.

8. In what year did Nebuchadnezzar carry away Jeconiah into captivity?

Life Application:

9. What applications can we make to our lives from chapters 20-24?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. “Those who stay in the city will die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.” (21:9)
2. “Why did I come forth from the womb to see toil and sorrow, and spend my days in shame?” (20:18)

25:1-29:32

JEREMIAH

Lesson 8

Goals of the lesson:

1. Understand the images of the yoke and cup of wrath.
2. Visualize the oppression against Jeremiah.

25:1-7 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **25:8-38 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

1. Explain the incident of Jeremiah serving the wine cup of wrath to the nations.

Selected In-Depth Text: **26:1-24 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

2. Who is Micah of Moresheth (26:18)?

3. Explain the arguments for and against the death of Jeremiah in 26:16-24 (vs. 20-23 were probably spoken by Jeremiah's opponents).

Selected In-Depth Text: 27:1-22 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

4. What is the meaning of the figure of the yokes?

Selected In-Depth Text: 28:1-17 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

Selected In-Depth Text: 29:1-14 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

5. In what year did the events of 29:2 take place?

29:15-23 Write down the main point of this passage.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. "You must drink!" from the cup of wrath. (25:28)
2. "Build houses and live in them." (29:5) You will be in Babylon many years.

30:1-33:26

JEREMIAH

Lesson 9

Goal of the lesson:

1. Visualize the images of the promise of the remnant.

30:1-24 Write down the main point of this chapter.

Selected In-Depth Text: **31:1-30 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

1. Explain the phrase in 31:2, "The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness." (NRSV)

2. Explain the circumstances of Rachel weeping in 31:15.

3. Notice 31:27-30.

a. Explain the principle stated here. What other prophet spoke these words?

Life Application:

b. How can we apply this principle to ourselves?

Selected In-Depth Text: 31:31-40 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

4. How would the new covenant not be like the covenant made with their ancestors?

5. What is being spoken of in 31:38-40?

Selected In-Depth Text: 32:1-25 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Special Note: Notice the condition of Jeremiah, where he is, what is happening, and who he is speaking with.

6. What is the purpose of the story of Jeremiah purchasing the field and putting the evidence of the purchase in an earthen vessel?

7. What is the main point of Jeremiah's prayer in 32:16-25?

32:26-44 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **33:1-26 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

8. Explain what the two families are in 33:24.

MAIN POINT TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. "Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land." (32:15) (NRSV)

34:1-37:21

JEREMIAH

Lesson 10

Goals of the lesson:

1. See the lack of desire to serve God by the king and officials.
2. Notice the circumstances of Jeremiah.

Selected In-Depth Text: 34:1-22 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

1. In what year does this chapter begin? (Cf. 2 Kings 25:1)

Selected In-Depth Text: 35:1-19 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

2. a. From what race of people did the Rechabites come? How does this figure into the lesson of this chapter? (Cf. 1 Chron. 2:55; Num. 10:29; Judges 1:16)

b. How long had it been since Jonadab had lived? (See 2 Kings 10:15-23)

Life Application:

3. What lesson was Jerusalem to learn from the Rachabites? What lessons can we learn?

Selected In-Depth Text: 36:1-32 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

4. Considering the nature of Jeremiah and the words he spoke, why do you think Jeremiah was prevented from entering the temple? (36:5)

5. Notice 36:15-26.

- a. What is the reaction of the king and the officials upon reading the scroll of Jeremiah?

Life Application:

- b. What applications can we make to ourselves when we hear the word of the Lord?

Selected In-Depth Text: 37:1-21 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Special Note: This section may explain why Jeremiah is imprisoned in chapter 36.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. "Until the entire scroll was consumed in the fire." (36:23)
2. "The officials were enraged at Jeremiah, and they beat him and imprisoned him...." (37:15)

38:1-43:13

JEREMIAH

Lesson 11

GOALS OF THE LESSON:

1. Imagine Jeremiah's feelings after the events of these chapters.
2. Visualize the destruction of Jerusalem

Selected In-Depth Text: 38:1-28 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Life Application:

1. What can we learn from the determination of Jeremiah in this chapter?

Selected In-Depth Text: **39:1-18** In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

2. Consider 39:11-12 in light of what Nebuchadnezzar has experienced with Daniel by this time:

Selected In-Depth Text: **40:1-16** In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

3. Find out what you can about Gedaliah (Cf. Jeremiah 26:24; 2 Kings 22:8)

Selected In-Depth Text: **41:1-18** In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Selected In-Depth Text: **42:1-22** In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

4. After all the years that Jeremiah had dealt with a disobedient people, imagine his feelings when he hears the people say the words of 42:5-6:

Selected In-Depth Text: **43:1-13** In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Life Application:

5. Consider the reaction of the people to what Jeremiah tells them after saying they would do whatever Jeremiah said. Are we like these people at times?
6. Explain the imagery of burying large stones.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. Jeremiah is thrown into a dungeon to die. (38:1-13)
2. The destruction of Jerusalem (chap. 39)

44:1-48:47

JEREMIAH

Lesson 12

Goals of the lesson:

1. Recognize the denunciation of idolatry.
2. Visualize the condemnation of surrounding nations.

Selected In-Depth Text: 44:1-30 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

1. Explain the question the people ask in 44:19.

Selected In-Depth Text: 45:1-5 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

2. Explain the Lord's answer to Baruch.

Selected In-Depth Text: 46:1-28 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

3. Explain the imagery in 46:10, especially the phrase "the Lord God of hosts holds a sacrifice in the land of the north."

Life Application:

4. What lesson can we learn from 46:28?

Selected In-Depth Text: 47:1-7 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

Selected In-Depth Text: 48:1-47 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

5. Notice 48:7 carefully.
- a. What is the reason that Moab is receiving judgment?

Life Application:

- b. What lesson can we learn from the mistake of Moab?

- c. What is “Chemosh?”

6. Explain the imagery given in 48:11-12.

7. Notice 48:26-27. Why did Moab consider Israel “the object of ridicule?” (NIV)

8. Explain the fulfillment of 48:47.

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. “I am going to bring disaster upon all flesh.” (45:5)
2. Judgments upon Egypt, Philistia, and Moab.

49:1-52:34

JEREMIAH

Lesson 13

Goals of the lesson:

1. Visualize the destruction of Babylon.
2. Recognize the vengeance of the Lord.

***Selected In-Depth Text:* 49:1-22 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

1. Explain what the Ammonites are accused of in 49:1.

2. Explain the figures presented in 49:9-10.

3. Consider the significance of 49:13 and 49:18 in light of the condition of the land of Edom today.

49:23-39 Write down the main point of this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: **50:1-10 In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

4. What is “Bel” and “Merodach” in 50:2?

5. What does 50:4-8 have to do with the fall of Babylon?

50:11-28 Write down the main point of this passage.

50:29-46 Write down the main point of the passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: 51:1-26 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

6. Who is prophesied to destroy Babylon?

51:27-44 Write down the main point in this passage.

Selected In-Depth Text: 51:45-64 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

7. Explain what Seraiah was to do when he reached Babylon and why.

Selected In-Depth Text: 52:1-34 **In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting. Be prepared to share your findings in class.**

8. Why does chapter 52 go into so much detail about the destruction of the temple and the fate of the temple furnishings?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. Judgment upon the other surrounding nations.
2. "Babylon shall become a heap of ruins...an object of horror and of hissing." (51:37)
3. "The Lord has brought forth our vindication." (51:10)