

OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF JEREMIAH – WHEN FAITHFULNESS LOOKS LIKE FAILURE

INTRODUCTION:

Jeremiah has a very important lesson to teach us today. Every believer has been called by God to faithfully serve the Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of our spiritual journey we hope to hear the commendation, “*Well done, good and faithful servant.*” But **success** in terms of God’s evaluation can look like **ministry failure** from the standpoint of our limited perspective. How do we persevere in ministry and remain faithful when we only experience rejection and defeat and fail to see any impact from our labors? That is the **calling** that Jeremiah exemplifies for us.

Let’s begin by jumping into Jeremiah **Chapter 1** and look at his **Call to Ministry**.

THE FAITHFUL PROPHET DRAWS COURAGE FROM HIS DIVINE CALLING TO COMMUNICATE ALL THAT GOD HAS REVEALED

(:1-3) PROLOGUE

A. (:1) Human Author = Jeremiah the Faithful Prophet Identified

1. By Name

“The words of Jeremiah,”

Name has been assigned a variety of meanings – I prefer: “Yahweh appoints” as a reference to the divine declaration of coming judgment on Judah and Jerusalem

2. By Family

“the son of Hilkiah,” – son of a priest

3. By Status

“of the priests who were in Anathoth” small village just 3 miles NE of Jerusalem

B. (:2a) Divine Origin and Authority

“to whom the word of the LORD came” Jeremiah was all about faithfully communicating the hard message of the word of the Lord – despite its unpopularity

C. (:2b-3) Historical Timeframe and Setting

1. (:2-3a) Dated by the 3 Main Stages of Jeremiah’s ministry by marked by the reign of 3 different kings of Judah

Book is not written chronologically – it bounces back and forth in time – you could group the passages under these 3 stages:

a. Days of Josiah – **Chaps. 1-6**

“in the days of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.”

Jehoahaz

22:10-12

b. Days of Jehoiakim -- **7-20, 25-26, 35-36, 45-46:12, 47-49**

“It came also in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah,”

Jehoiachin (Coniah) 22-23

c. Days of Zedekiah -- 21, 24, 27-34, 37-3

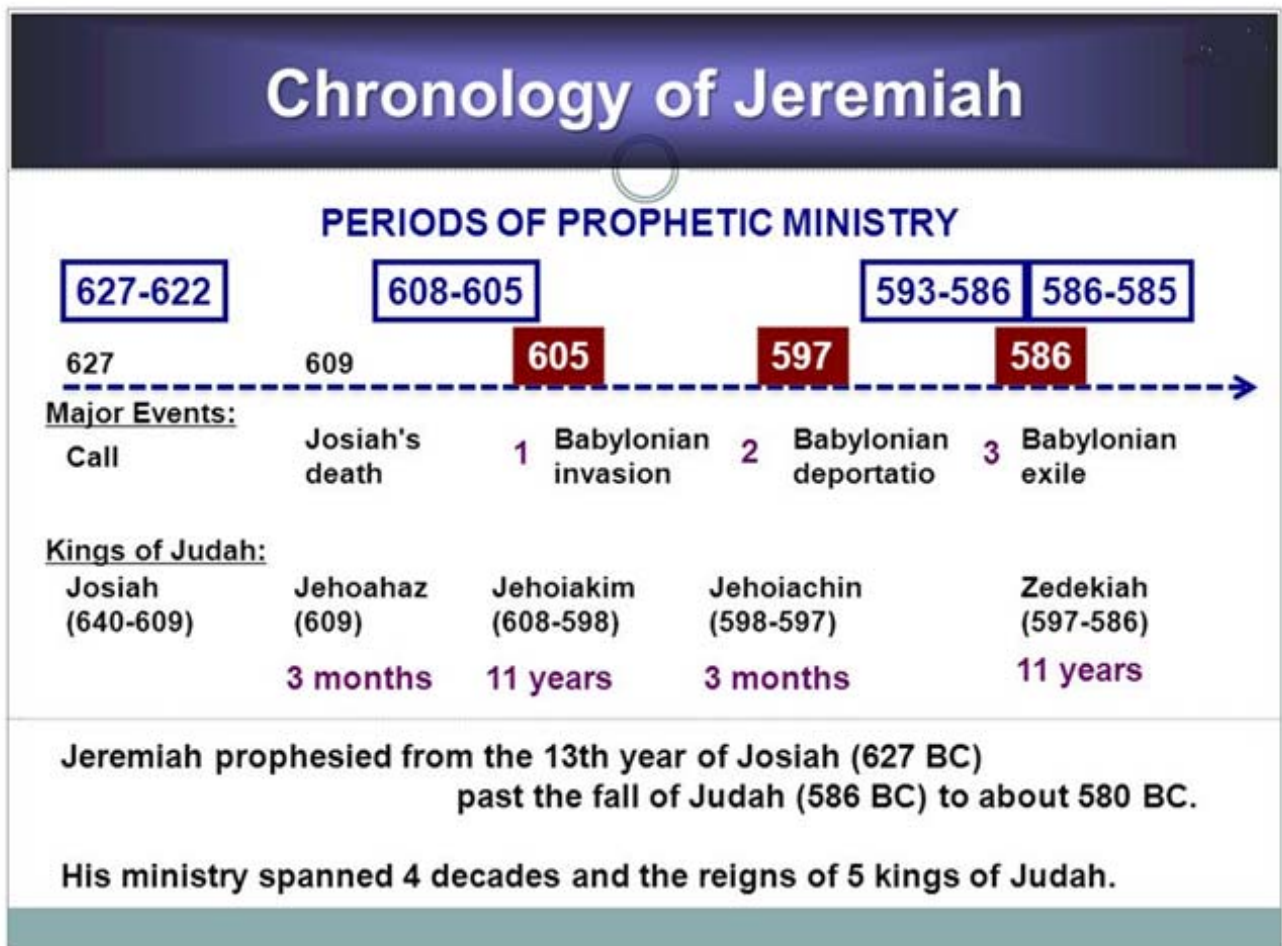
“until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, king of Judah,”

Gedaliah 40-44 (Neb’s puppet ruler)

2. Dated by the most significant historical event – the destruction of Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and the beginning of the 70 Year Babylonian Captivity

“until the exile of Jerusalem in the fifth month.”

David Thompson: This event was a climax to Jeremiah’s preaching and a demonstration of his authenticity as a genuine prophet of Yahweh.



I. (:4-10) COMMISSIONING OF JEREMIAH'S CALLING – TWO MAJOR THEMES = MESSAGE OF JUDGMENT AND RESTORATION

A. (:4-5) Role Predetermined – Sense of Mission

“Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, ‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.’”

If ever Jeremiah in later days was overtaken by despair he could know that the divine purpose for him reached back **before his birth**.

1. Intimate Personal Connection -- *“I knew you”*
2. Set Apart for Divine Purposes -- *“I consecrated you”*
3. Invested with Divine Authority -- *“I appointed you”*

B. (:6-8) Reluctance Refuted – Dealing with Inadequacy

1. (:6) Youthful Hesitancy

“Then I said, ‘Alas, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, Because I am a youth.’”

2 areas of hesitation: Inexperience and youth

2. (:7-8) Divine Direction, Enablement and Reassurance

“But the LORD said to me, ‘Do not say, I am a youth, Because everywhere I send you, you shall go, And all that I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, For I am with you to deliver you,’ declares the LORD.”

Our human inadequacy is always the backdrop for God's enablement -- **2 Cor. 3:5**

With God's calling comes God's gifting.

C. (:9-10) Results Predicted – Both Destroying (Judgment) and Building (Restoration) – Balanced Message

*“Then the LORD stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me, ‘Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms,
To pluck up and to break down,
To destroy and to overthrow,
To build and to plant.’”*

Much more of his message focused on the judgment aspect rather than the restoration aspect

- Isaiah focused on God providing Hope for His people through the promise of the coming Messiah.
- Jeremiah focuses on God bringing His Justice to bear with deserved judgments – but still with the hope of future Restoration.

II. (:11-16) CONFIRMATION OF JEREMIAH'S CALLING – TWO CONFIRMING VISIONS = ALMOND TREE AND BOILING POT

A. (:11-12) Vision of Rod of an Almond Tree = Certainty of Fulfillment

1. (:11) Vision

“And the word of the LORD came to me saying, ‘What do you see, Jeremiah?’

And I said, 'I see a rod of an almond tree.'"

2. (:12) Significance

"Then the LORD said to me, 'You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it.'"

B. (:13-16) Vision of Boiling Pot= Indictment of Judgment

1. (:13) Vision

"And the word of the LORD came to me a second time saying, 'What do you see?' And I said, 'I see a boiling pot, facing away from the north.'"

Van Parunak: The AV has it backwards: the face (the opening) of the pot is away from, not towards, the north. A boiling pot, about to spill over and dump its contents from north to south, symbolizing the invasion of the Babylonians, following the fertile crescent, from north to south.

2. (:14-16) Significance

"Then the LORD said to me, 'Out of the north the evil will break forth on all the inhabitants of the land. For, behold, I am calling all the families of the kingdoms of the north,' declares the LORD; 'and they will come, and they will set each one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all its walls round about, and against all the cities of Judah. And I will pronounce My judgments on them concerning all their wickedness, whereby they have forsaken Me and have offered sacrifices to other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands.

III. (:17-19) CHARGE OF JEREMIAH'S CALLING

A. (:17) Bold Proclamation – Sense of Urgency

1. (:17a) Content

"Now, gird up your loins, and arise, and speak to them all which I command you."

2. (:17b) Courage

"Do not be dismayed before them, lest I dismay you before them."

B. (:18-19) Reassuring Promise – Dealing with Danger

1. (:18) Impenetrable – 3 Military Images of Protection

"Now behold, I have made you today as a fortified city, and as a pillar of iron and as walls of bronze against the whole land, to the kings of Judah, to its princes, to its priests and to the people of the land."

2. (:19) Invincible

"And they will fight against you, but they will not overcome you, for I am with you to deliver you,' declares the LORD."

What type of OPPOSITION and PERSECUTION did Jeremiah face over his 4 decades of ministry?

But protected by God

1. Plotted Against by His Own Hometown People -- *Jeremiah 11:19, 21*

"But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter; And I did not know that they had devised plots against me, saying, 'Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, And let us cut him off from the land of the living, That his name be remembered no more.'"

People from **Anathoth**, Jeremiah's hometown (including his own relatives), plot to kill him. *"to seek his life"*

Philip Ryken: **Why the conspiracy?** The men of Anathoth did not like Jeremiah's preaching. They were not happy with his homiletics. . . it is not hard to guess why. Anathoth was a town of priests, and Jeremiah had some strong opinions about the priesthood. . . Not only did he criticize the priests, but he condemned the idol worship that made up such a large part of the economy. Jeremiah's reformation preaching threatened the whole religious, social, and economic structure of his hometown.

God reveals the assassination attempt and protects him.

2. Mocked and Rejected by the People --

"Woe to me, my mother, that you have borne me As a man of strife and a man of contention to all the land! I have neither lent, nor have men lent money to me, Yet everyone curses me." **Jeremiah 15:10**

- Jeremiah expresses **deep loneliness** and **discouragement**, feeling cursed by the very fact of his birth.

"I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone mocks me." **Jeremiah 20:7-8**

- He is mocked and ridiculed constantly for preaching God's judgment.

"Cursed be the day I was born!" **Jer. 20:14-18**

- Jeremiah curses the day of his birth—echoing Job's lament.

He wishes he had never been born because of the pain of his calling

3. Forbidden to Marry or Participate in Mourning or Feasts -- *Jeremiah 16:1-2*

"You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters..."

- God commands Jeremiah to live a life of **isolation** as a sign of impending judgment.
- He is also forbidden to mourn or feast with the people (**Jer. 16:5, 8**).

4. Accused and Beaten by a Priest / Put in the stocks -- *Jeremiah 20:1-2*

"Pashhur the priest... had Jeremiah the prophet beaten and put in the stocks."

- A **religious leader** has Jeremiah **beaten** and imprisoned in public humiliation.

- Afterward, Jeremiah prophesies Pashhur's doom (**Jer. 20:3–6**).

5. Put on Trial because of sermon of judgment he preached – Jer. 26

(26:12-15) Defense Made by Jeremiah

“Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and to all the people, saying,”

Chiastic structure

1. I Am God’s Faithful Prophet

“The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that you have heard.”

2. You Need to Repent to Avoid Judgment

“Now therefore amend your ways and your deeds and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will change His mind about the misfortune which He has pronounced against you.”

3. Be Careful What You Do With Me

“But as for me, behold, I am in your hands; do with me as is good and right in your sight. Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood on yourselves, and on this city and on its inhabitants;”

4. I Am God’s Faithful Prophet

“for truly the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing.”

6. Publicly opposed by the false prophet Hananiah because Jeremiah counseled the nation to submit to the invading forces of Babylon – Jer. 28:15-16

7. King Jehoiakim Opposes Him; Scroll Destroyed; Message Rejected -- Jeremiah 36

“As Jehudi read three or four columns, the king cut them off with a knife and threw them into the fire.”

- King Jehoiakim **burns** Jeremiah’s prophetic scroll, rejecting God's word outright.
- Jeremiah dictates a new scroll with added content —**God’s word cannot be silenced**

8. Imprisoned by King Zedekiah -- Jeremiah 37:15–16

“They beat him and imprisoned him in the house of Jonathan the scribe, which they had made into a prison.”

- Jeremiah is falsely accused of desertion and **beaten and imprisoned** in an underground dungeon.

9. Thrown into a Cistern (Left to Die) -- Jeremiah 38:4–6

“They took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern... there was no water in it, only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud.”

- Officials convinced King Zedekiah to throw Jeremiah into a **muddy cistern** to die.
- He is later rescued by **Ebed-Melech**, an Ethiopian official (**Jer. 38:7–13**).

10. Taken to Egypt Against His Will -- Jeremiah 43:1–7

The remnant was warned not to flee to Egypt but to remain in Judah; but they disobey and forcibly carry off Jeremiah and Baruch to Egypt

- Despite decades of faithful ministry, **the remnant still disobeys**, and **Jeremiah is dragged to Egypt**, where he likely died in obscurity.

Final Reflection:

Jeremiah’s perseverance through persecution mirrors the path of Christ—**rejected by men, faithful to God, and filled with sorrow**. *“man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”* – **Is. 53**

His life calls us to:

- Speak truth, even when it’s unpopular
- Endure hardship for God’s glory
- Trust in the ultimate justice and mercy of God

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” — **Matthew 5:10**

OVERVIEW

For a people with strong nationalistic pride with expectations of entitlement from their Covenant-keeping God, the exhortation to surrender to the deserved judgment of the Babylonian captivity was abhorrent. Jeremiah was called to bring a message that was more heavily weighted towards punishing than restoring, towards breaking down than building up. But Josiah’s reforms had been short-lived and the Lord’s patience with a nation of idolatry and apostasy had expired. Ultimately there would be restoration under the reign of the Messiah and the enjoyment of the blessings of the New Covenant, but in the short term certain judgment was looming. Despite his sensitive personality and love for his people, Jeremiah was attacked and vilified for his faithful proclamation of God’s message.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK:

(1:1-19) INTRODUCTION – CALL OF JEREMIAH

**I. (2:1 – 25:38) MESSAGE OF CONDEMNATION -- PROPHECIES OF DIVINE JUDGMENT ON JUDAH AND JERUSALEM
(10 ALTERNATING MESSAGES OF INDICTMENT AND COMING JUDGMENT)**

II. (26:1 – 29:32) MESSAGE OF CONFRONTATION AGAINST FALSE PROPHETS

III. (30:1 – 33:26) MESSAGE OF CONSOLATION – PROMISE OF RESTORATION / NEW COVENANT

IV. (34:1 – 45:5) CALL TO OBEDIENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

V. (46:1 – 51:64) MESSAGE OF CONDEMNATION -- PROPHECIES OF DIVINE JUDGMENTS ON THE GENTILE NATIONS

(52:1-34) –CLIMAX – FALL OF JERUSALEM

**I. (2:1 – 25:38) MESSAGE OF CONDEMNATION --
PROPHECIES OF DIVINE JUDGMENT ON JUDAH AND JERUSALEM
(10 ALTERNATING MESSAGES OF INDICTMENT AND COMING JUDGMENT)**

5 MESSAGES OF INDICTMENT

[Each time followed by a corresponding message of Judgment]

**1. (2:1 – 3:5) Indictment for Idolatry, Immorality and Incomprehensible Apostasy
**FORSAKING THE LIFE-GIVING FOUNTAIN OF THE ONE TRUE GOD FOR
BROKEN CISTERNS MAKES ABSOLUTELY NO SENSE****

(2:1-8) Contrast between Devotion and Desertion

*"I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth, The love of your betrothals, Your following after Me in the wilderness, Through a land not sown."
(2:2)*

"What injustice did your fathers find in Me, That they went far from Me And walked after emptiness and became empty?" (2:5)

(2:9-19) Consequences of Forsaking the One True God

**(:9-13) Shocking Exchange – antagonizing God; exchanging glory for futility;
exchanging fullness of life for emptiness**

(:14-16) Shameful Effects – Bondage / Destruction / Disgrace

**(:17-19) Shattered End – Nobody to blame but yourself / Nowhere else to turn for
deliverance / no fear of God to guard against self destruction**

(2:20-37) 3 Condemning Questions for Jerusalem

(:20-25) How can you claim innocence?

(:26-28) How can you argue with the fairness of God's judgment?

(:31-37) How can you justify your independent spirit?

2. (7:1 – 10:25) Indictment for Hypocritical Worship

(7:1 – 8:3) 4 Forms of Hypocritical Worship God Hates

(:3-15) Religious Formalism

(:16-20) Shameful Idolatry – look at the description of some of their specific idolatry:

○ 8:2 – worshipping the host of heaven – heathen gods associated with the occult;

○ 7:18 – worshipping the queen of heaven – one of the gods worshiped by heathen people;

○ 19:5 – offering sacrifices to Molech

○ 2:8 – worshipping Baal

(:21-28) Man-Made Worship

(:29-34) Detestable Child Sacrifice

(8:4-22) Why Not Repent? – 3 Explanations of Israel's Refusal to Repent despite Warnings

(:4-7) Characterization of Amazing Arrogance –

Their refusal to repent was irrational

(:8-12) Catalogue of Pervasive Wickedness –

Their refusal to repent was ignorant and self-serving

(:13-17) Catastrophe of Divine Judgment –

Their refusal to repent was irreversible

3. (13:1-27) Indictment Against Pride – Pride Perverts Privileged Position Into the Shame and Humiliation of Degrading Domination

(:1-11) Metaphor of Linen Belt – from Privilege to Putrification – The Best Became the Worst – God's Chosen People Have Proven to be Worthless and Worthy of Destruction

(:12-14) Metaphor of Jugs of Wine – from Imbibing to Intoxication – God's Wrath will Fill the Wicked as They are Destroyed

(:15-27) Messages of Shame and Humiliation – addressed to the prideful people, to the deposed royal leaders and to the vanquished city

4. (18:1 – 20:18) Indictment Against an Independent Spirit — Sovereignty, Shock and Struggles

Don't blame God or His prophet when the clay gets smashed for refusing to yield to its potter

5. (22:1 – 24:10) Indictment Against Judah's Faithless Kings and False Prophets

(23:1-40) False Prophets Denounced

I. (:1-2) EVIL SHEPHERDS FACE DIVINE ACCOUNTABILITY

A. Evil Practices of Counterfeit Spiritual Shepherds

1. Injurious Shepherding

“Destroying and Scattering the sheep of My pasture”

“Scattered My flock and driven them away”

2. Inattentive Shepherding

“Concerning the shepherds who are tending My people”

“Have not attended to them”

B. Emphatic Warning Woes

II. (:3-8) GOD’S FAITHFUL SHEPHERD (THE MESSIAH) WILL ULTIMATELY REIGN IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

III. (:9-15) EVIL SHEPHERDS DESERVE GOD’S CONDEMNATION

IV. (:16-24) FOLLOWING EVIL SHEPHERDS LEADS ONLY TO FUTILITY

“Thus says the Lord of hosts,

‘Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you,

They are leading you into futility;”

7 Reasons:

A. (:16) Because the Source of Their Message is Human Rather than Divine

“They speak a vision of their own imagination.”

B. (:17) Because the Security They Offer is False

“They keep saying to those who despise Me,

The Lord has said, ‘You will have peace’,

And as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart,

They say, ‘Calamity will not come upon you.’”

C. (:18) Because the Stiff-Necked Nature of These Prophets is Evident

“But who has stood in the council of the Lord,

That he should see and hear His word?

Who has given heed to His word and listened?”

D. (:19-20) Because the Severity of God’s Judgment Will Soon Be Seen

“Behold, the storm of the Lord has gone forth in wrath,

Even a whirling tempest;

It will swirl down on the head of the wicked.

The anger of the Lord will not turn back

Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart;

In the last days you will clearly understand it.”

E. (:21) Because the Sending of These Prophets Carries No Authority

“I did not send these prophets, but they ran.

I did not speak to them, but they prophesied.”

F. (:22) Because the Senselessness of These Prophets is Incredible

*“But if they had stood in My council,
Then they would have announced My words to My people,
And would have turned them back from their evil way
And from the evil of their deeds.”*

G. (:23-24) Because the Sight of God Reaches to All Corners of the Universe

*“‘Am I a God who is near,’ declares the Lord,
‘And not a God far off?’
Can a man hide himself in hiding places
So I do not see him?’ declares the Lord.
‘Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?’ declares the Lord.”*

**V. (:25-32) GOD OPPOSES FALSE PROPHETS THAT DECEPTIVELY CLAIM
DIVINE REVELATION**

**VI. (:33-40) GOD WILL HAVE THE LAST WORD –
GOD SARCASTICALLY MOCKS THOSE WHO MOCKINGLY REJECT THE HARSH
TRUTH OF GOD’S LEGITIMATE REVELATION OF COMING JUDGMENT**

II. (26:1 – 29:32) MESSAGE OF CONFRONTATION AGAINST FALSE PROPHETS

Already dealt with theme of false prophets in **Chap. 23**

**(27:16-22) WARNING TO THE PRIESTS AND THE PEOPLE TO REJECT THE
MESSAGE OF THE FALSE PROPHETS**

A. (:16-17) The Lie of the False Prophets and Its Consequences

*“Then I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD:
Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying,
‘Behold, the vessels of the LORD’s house will now shortly be brought again
from Babylon’; for they are prophesying a lie to you. Do not listen to them;
serve the king of Babylon, and live! Why should this city become a ruin?’”*

**B. (:18-22) The Litmus Test for Genuine Prophets – Compare Their Agenda to
God’s Agenda**

1. (:18) Their Agenda = What They Say Will Happen

*“But if they are prophets, and if the word of the LORD is with them, let
them now entreat the LORD of hosts that the vessels which are left in the
house of the LORD, in the house of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem
may not go to Babylon.”*

2. (:19-22) God’s Agenda = What God Actually Makes Happen

*“For thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, concerning the
sea, concerning the stands and concerning the rest of the vessels that are*

left in this city, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon did not take when he carried into exile Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem. Yes, thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left in the house of the LORD and in the house of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem, 'They will be carried to Babylon and they will be there until the day I visit them,' declares the LORD. 'Then I will bring them back and restore them to this place.'"

(29:8-9) Prophecy of Deception Must Be Rejected – False Prophets Only Offer False Hope and Deceive

"For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream. For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them,' declares the LORD."

Derek Kidner: Marks of false prophets:

- incitement to serve other gods (even when it was supported by signs and wonders and true predictions, **Dt. 13-5**)
- predictions that failed (**Dt. 18:20-22, cf. Je. 28:9**)
- indulgent preaching (**Je. 23:17, 32**)
- and here, immoral living (**29:23**)

III. (30:1 – 33:26) MESSAGE OF CONSOLATION – PROMISE OF RESTORATION / NEW COVENANT

Provisions of the New Covenant – Jer. 31:31ff

- It is Promised to National Israel (House of Israel & Judah), Not to the NT Church as Such. The Church (largely Gentile, plus Jewish believers) are beneficiaries in certain spiritual respects of this covenant but are not itself the covenant party in the full sense of what Jeremiah spells out.
- It Contrasts with (and Supersedes) the Mosaic Covenant
The covenant with Israel promised in Jeremiah 31 is explicitly "not like" the covenant given at Sinai. The Sinai covenant was external, largely based on law (written on tablets of stone, external observance, etc.), which Israel repeatedly failed to keep. The New Covenant promises internal law, changed hearts, etc.
- Spiritual Renewal: Law on the Heart, Internal Transformation
One of the chief features is that God will put His law within them, write it on their hearts (and minds). This is a spiritual renewal: regeneration, conversion, an enabling by the Spirit to obey. This is not just moral improvement but a radical renewal.
- Universal Knowledge of God flowing out to all nations from Israel
All Israel will know the Lord personally, from least to greatest.
- Forgiveness of Sin in a Final and Complete Sense
A key part of the New Covenant: sins will be forgiven, and God will remember their sin no more.

- Already Inaugurated but Not Fully Realized

The New Covenant was inaugurated in part in the person and work of Christ (the sacrifice, the giving of the Holy Spirit), and its blessings are now experienced by the Church in spiritual sense. But many of the covenant's promises (especially national restoration, full knowledge by Israel, sin forgiven nationally, etc.) await future, eschatological fulfillment—during or after the Millennial Kingdom.

- Eschatological Context

The promise of the New Covenant is tied to the restoration of Israel, regathering to the land, reestablishment of Israel, and a future literal kingdom. The New Covenant is part of what God promises in the last days for Israel as a nation – as God fulfils the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants in the person of the Messiah.

IV. (34:1 – 45:5) CALL TO OBEDIENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Circumstances of the Prophet Jeremiah in relation to the Fall of Jerusalem

- A. **34-36** Circumstances before the Fall
- B. **37-39** Circumstances during the Fall
- C. **40-45** Circumstances after the Fall

Chap. 35 – The Priority of Obeying the Word of God

Test case of the sons of Jonadab, the Rechabites – enticed to drink strong drink but were unwilling to disobey their patriarch. They remained faithful and obedient. How much more the Israelites are culpable for not remaining loyal to a far greater authority.

David Guzik: The sons of Jonadab passed the test and refused the wine. The public nature of the ceremony, the presence of their entire clan, and prominence of the prophet, the proximity of the temple all added pressure to drink the wine. They also had the prior exception of coming into the city and leaving their nomadic life for a period; if that was an exception, it would be easy to make more. Yet they did not and were faithful.

V. (46:1 – 51:64) MESSAGE OF CONDEMNATION -- PROPHECIES OF DIVINE JUDGMENTS ON THE GENTILE NATIONS

God is sovereign over world history—even over ungodly nations. Evil may seem to prosper, but it's under God's control. He can use wicked nations as His instrument to carry out His purposes. That does not exempt them from their own accountability and judgment.

God used Israel as His instrument of judgment against the pagan Canaanites.

Later, God used Assyria and then Babylon to judge His own people for their apostasy and idolatry and immorality.

Look at how God repeatedly calls pagan King Nebuchadnezzar “*His servant*” – **25:9; 27:6; 43:10**

Yet God promises to punish Babylon for the evil they had done to Israel – **51:24, 56**

Just because God uses a nation or a person does not automatically safeguard them from future judgment. God holds everyone accountable

Babylon ended up as a heap of ruins – **51:37**

(52:1-34) – CLIMAX – FALL OF JERUSALEM

PROPHETIC FULFILLMENT OF THE FALL OF JERUSALEM VINDICATES THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD AND THE ACCURATE PREDICTIONS OF JEREMIAH

Trevor Longman: By placing the description of the fall of Jerusalem after the oracles against the foreign nations and as last in the canonical book, the editor reminds the reader of what is of first order importance in the book. Yes, Babylon and the other foreign nations will get what they deserve, but Judah deserves its punishment as well. The description of the fall of Jerusalem also is a way of showing how Jeremiah’s earlier prophetic words did come to pass. It is Jeremiah not the false prophets who spoke the truth.

(:1-11) Jerusalem Dethroned

(:12-16) Jerusalem Demolished

(:17-23) Jerusalem Desecrated – pillaging the temple

(:24-30) Jerusalem Depouled

(:31-34) Hope Remains for God’s People – **2 Kings 25:27-30**

Favorable treatment of King Jehoiachin

CONCLUSION:

Sinners do not like the truth; they don’t want to listen to the truth; Instead Judah listened to false prophets who tickled their ears; they did not want their sin and rebellion exposed and they resisted warnings about God’s impending judgment.

Remember: Faithful Ministry can Look Like Failure:

- Ministry success does not necessarily equal positive results (cf. many missionaries around the world working with hardened hostile people groups); God’s criteria of success = our faithfulness to opportunities and our obedience to His leading;
- We must be faithful in ministry and leave the results up to God; this might mean we suffer rejection and persecution and look like a failure in this life as did the prophet Jeremiah