

# Jeremiah Study

## Introduction (~30 Min)

- 42 Years of Ministry & no one listened to him
- Jesus quoted Jeremiah more than any other prophet
- Called into ministry at age 20 (10 years earlier than Jewish custom allowed)
- God “knew, sanctified & ordained” Jeremiah before he was born.
- Known as the “weeping prophet” because he cried a lot
- Was a prophet under 4 kings
  - Josiah (640 BC - 609 BC) - Good
  - Jehoiakim (609 BC - 598 BC) - Bad
  - Jehoiachin (only ruled 3 months) - Bad
  - Zedekiah (579 BC - 586 BC) - Bad
- The Book of Jeremiah is NOT chronological.
  - Think of it as a book of various sermons organized by topic or theme.

## What’s going on in Isreal?

God calls Jeremiah under Josiah’s Reign:

- Josiah was 8 years old when he became king (see 2 Kings 22)
  - Josiah had been ruling 13 years (now 21) when Jeremiah begins ministry.
    - Josiah & Jeremiah are close in age
  - Josiah rules for 31 years
  - Josiah “did what was right in the sight of the Lord” (see 2 Kings 22:2)
  - Josiah’s heart is in real revival & he is trying return the Jewish people to God’s Covenant
    - The problem is, while the people “appear” to be in revival (going through the motions), their hearts aren’t really in it & they start to backslide

Through Jeremiah, we’re going to see that God is “Big Mad”. 2 Kings 23: 1:30 gives us some color into *why*. (Read 2 Kings 23:1-30)

Starving	Related Scripture	Key Points
	Read 2 Kings 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They find the book of the Law</li><li>• Josiah Reads it</li><li>• Josiah tears his close in mourning</li><li>• Josiah commands the priests to seek the Lord</li></ul>
	Read 2 Kings 23: 1-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reads the laws of the covenant out loud to all inhabitants</li><li>• Makes a covenant with the Lord to follow commandments, statutes, and decrees with his <b>whole heart</b></li><li>• He tried to reform Judah &amp; Jerusalem</li><li>• He went on a complete rampage destroying everything associated with idolatry.</li></ul>

And So... Enter Jeremiah (Stage Left)

# The Extent of Judah's Idolatry

(See 2 Kings 23:1-30)

- Didn't even know where the Law book was (had to find it)
- INSIDE the Temple of the Lord, they had:
  - Objects made for false idols
  - Asherah (Canaanite goddess associated with fertility & motherhood)
- GROUNDS of the Temple of the Lord (Outside, courtyard, etc)
  - Dedicated horses & chariots to the sun
  - Altars to false gods

**Perspective:** This would be a generation of people who grew up with these idols inside the Temple of God. From their perspective (what they knew), did they think this was wrong?

- ❖ "Ignorance is no excuse from the law" - A concept that we have in our US Judicial System, that holds true with God's law also.

## Idol worship outside the Temple:

- They burned incense in Judah & vicinity of Jerusalem to Baal, the sun, moon & signs of the zodiac & "whole host of heaven" (referring to stars & planets)
- Apartments of cult prostitutes
- Burned incense on high hills & at the Gate of Joshua
- Priests of these false-gods ate the Unleavened bread
- Burned children in honor of Molech
- Built temples on the high places to false gods
- Didn't observe Passover

## Chapter 1

(1:5) God knew, sanctified & ordained Jeremiah before he was born

(1:7) Jeremiah is worried that he's too young (no one will listen to him)

	<b>Cultural Context</b> In Jewish tradition, ministry began at <b>age 30</b> . The stems from God's instruction to Moses in Numbers 4:3 Jesus began His ministry at age 30. (Luke 3:23)
	<b>Symbolism</b> The "Almond Tree" is symbolic of "awaken" or "come early" because it was one of the 1 <sup>st</sup> trees to bloom.

(1:16) They are in trouble because

1. They have forsaken God
2. They burned incense to other gods
3. They worshiped the works of their own hands

(1:8) & (1:17-19) - "Do not be afraid of their faces". Don't worry if people like you. God gives authority & it is His approval that we should seek.

## Chapter 2

(2:1-3) God speaking of "young love", remember when they first loved Him.

(2:4-8) God asks, what did I do wrong to you that you left me?

- He delivered them through trials
- Gave them a land of abundance
- Once they had all His blessings, they forgot all about him.



### Examine

Do we get too comfortable in our blessings?  
Do we give credit (or trust) to *people* or *things* rather than God?

(2:9) Children's Children



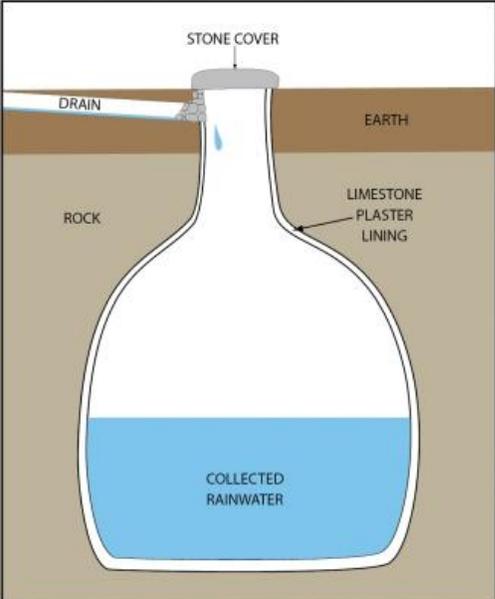
### Prophecy Fun Fact

A "generation" in this culture was typically viewed as ~ 40 years.  
Giving this prophecy in ~626 BC (assuming the audience likely already *had* children), would align with the actual Fall of Jerusalem that occurred ~ 40 years *after* Jeremiah spoke these words.

(2:10-11) God is saying that everyone else in the world are more loyal to their false gods than Israel has been to Him. They don't change their gods.

(2:13) Two Evils

1. Forsaken the Lord
2. Hewn broken cisterns (idolatry)

	<p><b>Cultural Context:</b> What are cisterns? Cisterns were underground reservoirs used to collect and store rainwater. They were essential for water supply in arid regions with limited natural water sources</p> <p>Broken cistern cannot hold water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God is the “fountain of living water”. No need to collect &amp; store it, He keeps flowing.</li> </ul>	
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(2:27-28) The people give credit & worship false gods when times are good, but they all of a sudden they remember & cry out to God when things are bad. (Only call when they want something)

	<p><b>Examine</b> What’s our prayer life like? Do we call God just to say “hello”? Or do we only call when we need something?</p>
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## Chapter 3

(3:1) In chapter 2 God reflects on “young love” & He expands this imagery here by stating that his people have divorced him.

- “...Yet return to Me” - Is this an invitation or a rhetorical question?

(3:2) “polluted the land..” See 2 Kings 23 for the extent of the temples & idol worship that was going on in the land.

(3:3) Harlot’s Forehead = Boldy stubborn without shame

	<p><b>Symbolism:</b> The Forehead The Bible often uses the “forehead” to symbolize someone’s thoughts &amp; disposition. <b>Fun Fact:</b> Science eventually caught up with the Bible in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when it discovered that directly <i>behind</i> the forehead is the frontal lobe of the brain which controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personality</li> <li>• Characteristics</li> <li>• Decision making</li> </ul>
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	God was using this reference all the way back to Exodus 28:38 (~1446 BC )
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(3:10) "in pretense" False Revival: Going through the motions, following the trend, checking off the checklist, but not genuinely walking in the change.

	<p><b>Examine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are we following "the Trend" more than "following God"?</li> <li>• Are we walking in the message every day? Or are we just checking the off the to-do list? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Went to Church</li> <li>✓ Went to Bible Study</li> <li>✓ Clicked "Like" or "Prayer hands" on a prayer request</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p><b>Lightening Challenge</b></p> <p>Every one of us has a ministry, &amp; it's 24/7. What we don't fill intentionally get's filled with the unintentional. i.e. What does our "line at grocery store" ministry say about God to those around us?</p>