

## Week 33 Chronological

### August 10: Jeremiah 10-13

God again speaks of the silliness of idolatry. A person cuts down a tree. A craftsman works it with a chisel and decorates it and somehow it becomes a god. It is just like a scarecrow in the field. It cannot move, it cannot speak, it simply sits there. Since they cannot do anything, the people have no need to fear these false gods. Instead, they should fear God Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth. This idolatry will lead to a siege against the city. The siege will bring exile to the people. Jeremiah receives this news and is devastated. This news moves him to mourning. The people remain committed to their sin.

The LORD tells Jeremiah to make a proclamation against the people. God had delivered them from Egypt and told them to obey His commands. They did not obey His voice and fell away. The current residents do not obey Him either. God is going to bring disaster on them. When it hits, they will cry out to Him, but He will not hear them. God says that they should take their petitions to the false gods that they burned incense to and let them save the people.

Jeremiah approaches God with humility. He has a question that is worth asking. Jeremiah asks God why wicked people prosper and treacherous people live in ease. We see the same issues today. Evil and wicked people living easy lives, living in big home, and driving fancy cars without a care in the world. Jeremiah asks that God would sweep away the wicked and save the land.

God responds by questioning Jeremiah. If Jeremiah has raced with runners and they have worn him out, then how can he keep up with horses? Though there was wickedness in the land and these evil people seemed to thrive, there is a coming army comprised of people that are even more wicked. Essentially, the response is *if you think it is bad now, just wait until later when it gets even worse*.

Jeremiah is commanded to go buy new linen underwear. He is then to take the linen and place it in rocky crevice by the Euphrates, approximately 350 miles away. After a long while, Jeremiah is to go back and retrieve the linen. When he does, he declares that the garment is ruined. God declares that He will do the same to the pride of Judah and Jerusalem. These evil people will be of no use to Him. Things are looking grim; they have for a while. God is so good, though, that He will later make a way for these people to be redeemed.

### August 11: Jeremiah 14-17

These chapters were written during a severe drought in Judah. The drought has brought mourning. The people go to the cistern and do not find any water. They cover their heads in shame and humiliation. God tells Jeremiah not to pray for these people since they have not followed Him. If they fast, He will not hear their cry. He will not accept their grain or burnt offerings. Jeremiah is quick to remind God that the people have been led astray by the false prophets. They are telling the people that good times are ahead, stating that they will not see

sword or suffer famine. God pronounces judgment on the prophets. They will be destroyed, and no one will be around to bury their bodies. Jeremiah pleads for God's mercy.

The LORD is so mad that even if "Moses and Samuel" stood before Him, He would still not have compassion on the people. Four kinds of judgment will be ordained for them. God commands Jeremiah to not marry or have children while he is in Judah. Children born in the land will suffer disease and die. When Jeremiah gives these words to the people, they will ask why God has abandoned them. They will want to know what their guilt is. God's response is simple; their fathers abandoned Him and followed other gods. Despite His coming judgment, He pronounces that they will return to the land that He gave their ancestors. Even in this fierce judgment, God promises that He will return them to the land He gave their ancestors.

Jeremiah 17 contains one of my favorite verses. Verse 9 "The heart is more deceitful than anything else, and incurable- who can understand it?" We should not trust our hearts! It is deceitful above all else. Our heart can trick us into chasing down the wrong thing. Our hearts can turn us to sin. Sin has been justified with sayings such as "the heart wants what the heart wants". As believers, we should seek God first and what He wants.

## **August 12: Jeremiah 18-22**

Jeremiah is sent to the potter's house. Jeremiah sees that the potter is making a jar at the wheel. As the potter works the jar, it became flawed. The potter then made it into another jar since that is what seemed right to do. God then asks if He cannot treat His people in such a way. He had set them apart to be holy. They became flawed, though. They strayed from God. Since He is the creator, He has the right to do what He wants.

There are many that do not like what Jeremiah has to say. Rather than reflecting inwardly and thinking about what they can do to take the upcoming judgment off them, they try to shut the mouthpiece. If the terrible news of a hurricane is announced by credible news sources, we cannot stop the hurricane by turning off the television and not listening to the news. It is coming regardless of whether we want to hear it or not. Yet, this is what these people opposing Jeremiah try to do.

The LORD continues with the image of pottery. Jeremiah is to buy a potter's clay jar, take some of the elders and leading priest to the Valley of Hinnom. He is to condemn the worship of false gods and pronounce judgment on Judah. To demonstrate the coming destruction, Jeremiah is ordered to shatter the jar in the presence of the people.

A chief official in the temple of the LORD names Pashhur has Jeremiah beaten and placed in the stocks at the Upper Benjamin Gate in The LORD's temple. When Jeremiah is released, he does not cower against the man that had done this to him. Instead, he pronounces judgment on Pashhur, saying his name is now Magor-missabib which means "terror all around".

Zedekiah the king sends Pashhur and Malchijah to Jeremiah. He wants them to ask Jeremiah to ask on their behalf since Nebuchadnezzar is making war against them. Jeremiah gives God's word to Zedekiah. God will repel the weapons of war Judah uses against Babylon. God will

fight against them with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm. God will judge against the sinful kings. Judgment is pronounced against king Shallum, king Jehoiakim, and Coniah son of Jehoiakim. Coniah is referred to as Jehoiachin in Kings and Chronicles.

### **August 13: Jeremiah 23-25**

The leaders of Judah are called to account. God pronounced judgment against them for leading the sheep astray. God had given them a solemn charge of caring for His flock. Rather than care for the flock, they fleeced it. The LORD will gather the remnant back from the lands that He banished them to. They will become fruitful and numerous. A righteous leader from David's line will rise up. He will save Judah. This is a reference to Jesus the Messiah. The false prophets will be driven out and God will bring disaster upon them.

Nebuchadnezzar deports Coniah, referred to as Jeconiah in chapter 24. Remember, he is Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim. God shows Jeremiah two baskets of figs in front of the temple of The LORD. One basket contained very good figs. The other basket contained figs that were inedible because they were so terrible. God regards the exiled people as the good figs. He will keep an eye on them and return them to the land. The bad figs represent Zedekiah, and those poor leaders like him. They will be an object of scorn, ridicule, and cursing.

The people will be exiled under Nebuchadnezzar for a period of 70 years and the people will serve the king of Babylon. The nations that will taste God's wrath are listed in chapter 25. Further, judgment is headed to all the earth. Disaster will spread from nation to nation.

### **August 14: Jeremiah 26-29**

We go back in time a bit in Jeremiah 26. The date for this event is at the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim (609 B.C.). The LORD tells Jeremiah to stand in the courtyard and speak all the words He commands. He is to not hold back anything because they might listen to him and turn from their ways. God knows that they will not, but He sends Jeremiah anyway. God has foreknowledge and nothing surprises Him.

While Jeremiah is speaking, he is seized by the priests, the prophets, and the people. They proclaim that Jeremiah should certainly die. They are upset that he is prophesying against the city and announcing the destruction of the temple. They take Jeremiah to the officials and declare Jeremiah deserves the death penalty. We can learn a couple of things from this. 1. Just because we do not like the truth, does not mean it is not true. 2. Doing God's will and obeying Him does not mean that our lives will be easy. Jeremiah was following God's commands to the letter and the mob tried to get him executed for it.

Jeremiah defends himself and explains he has been doing what God has commanded him. The people then decide that he does not deserve the death penalty since he has spoken in the name of God. Other prophets had spoken against the city, and they were not executed for it.

At the beginning of Zedekiah's reign, the word of the LORD comes to Jeremiah. The invaders from Babylon are coming. Zedekiah is directed to submit to them. He is to place their necks under the yoke of Babylon and serve him and his people.

Hananiah, another prophet at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign. Hananiah is a false prophet, saying that their servitude to Babylon will only be for two years. After that two-year period, God will break the yoke of the Babylonians. The king of Judah will be restored, and the temple and its furnishings will return. This is all false. Jeremiah replies to the prophecies in the presence of the priests and all the people standing in the temple of the LORD. Hananiah maintains his false prophecy and God responds. Hananiah broke a wooden yoke from Jeremiah's back. In its place he will make an iron yoke bar. Hananiah will die that year because of his rebellion against God.

### **August 15: Jeremiah 30 and 31**

God gives comforting words to Jeremiah. He tells Jeremiah to record that a time is coming when He will restore the fortune of the Israelites. He will bring them back from the exile and put them back in their land. God's promise points out to future time when David will be raised up as a king for them. David was the best king that the Israelites had in their entire history. God is pointing to a future king, the perfect king, will come and reign over His people. Jesus, the Messiah and perfect king, is a descendant of David.

We also read about the fearful wrath of The LORD. His wrath has gone out, churning like a storm. It whirls about the heads of the wicked. Though the wicked seem to be prospering at this point in time, they will experience God's judgment. As believers, God's wrath against us as sinners has been satisfied by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ our Savior.

When God restores them, it will go back to how it was originally intended. He will be their God and they will be His people. A time of joyous dancing is coming to them. They will plant vineyards again and enjoy their fruits. God promises that He will establish a new covenant with His people. This covenant will be different than the old covenants that the people broke. Now, God will put His teaching within them and write it on their hearts. Rather than learn from others, they will learn from God. The Holy Spirit is a vital component in this regard. It is the Spirit that opens up the heart and mind of a believer and teaches the way of The LORD. The Spirit gives guidance and allows us to understand God's word.

### **August 16: Jeremiah 32-34**

Things were looking bleak in Jerusalem. It was a dark time. Jeremiah was imprisoned in the guard's courtyard. Nebuchadnezzar was besieging Jerusalem. Zedekiah the king had thrown Jeremiah in prison for telling the truth of the coming exile. When Zedekiah confronts Jeremiah about the prophecies, Jeremiah does not back down. Instead, he maintains what God has told him to say. He does not back down. Would we be willing to go to jail for preaching the truth of Jesus?

During this rough time in the nation's history, God tells Jeremiah to purchase land. That seems completely counterintuitive. Jerusalem is about to fall, and The LORD is telling him to invest in

land that will be taken by the Chaldeans. He questions The LORD about His command. God reminds him that He is the God of all flesh and asks Jeremiah if there is anything that He cannot do. The answer, of course, is that God can do whatever He wants. He spoke all of creation into existence. Surely, He will deliver on this promise that Jeremiah's purchase will not be a waste.

While Jeremiah is still in prison, God's word comes to him again. The city will fall because of their sin against God. The men that go to fight the Chaldeans will stack the corpses of their fellow fallen soldiers. God has hidden His face from the city because of their sin. He also promises that He will bring health and healing to the land. Chapter 33 verses 14-16 point to the Messiah, Jesus, the Righteous Branch from David. He will administer justice and Judah will be secure.

Jeremiah takes comforting words to Zedekiah. Zedekiah will not die by the sword but will die peacefully. Zedekiah makes a covenant with the people of Judah so that they would all give up their slaves. The people go along with the covenant at first, but later change their minds and reclaim their slaves. The LORD speaks to Jeremiah reminding the people of his instruction about servants. After six years of service, the slaves were to be made free. When the people decided to set their slaves free, it pleased God since they were following His command. He warns them that they changed their minds and now He is no longer pleased. In life, do we do what makes us happy? Or do we do what makes us holy?

### **August 17: Jeremiah 35-37**

The Rechabites are known mostly from Jeremiah 35. Their founder was Jonadab, son of Rechab, who lived in the northern kingdom. Jonadab fully endorsed King Jehu's reforms. The reforms included the demolishing of the Baal cults and other Canaanite practices. The Rechabites made an oath to their ancestor that they would not drink wine or build houses. Living in tents made it easy for them to pick up and leave the northern kingdom of Israel to the southern kingdom of Judah. God uses the Rechabites as an example to how the people of Judah should have responded to Him. The Rechabites kept their vow to Jonadab. The people of Judah did not obey God despite the fact that He has sent His prophets to warn them time and time again. God pronounces His blessings on the Rechabites because of their loyalty.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim (605-604 BC), Nebuchadnezzar won his victory over the Assyrian forces at Carchemish. He began his move toward Syria. God has Jeremiah dictate a scroll to announce the impending doom. The LORD is trying to get the attention of His people. Jeremiah sends Baruch to the temple to read the scroll since he is barred from entering the temple. When Micaiah hears the words of the scroll, he alerts the scribes. The scribes, appalled at what they hear, go and ask Baruch how he came to write these words. Baruch explains it was from God. The officials tell Baruch that he and Jeremiah have to hide. They take the word to Jehoiakim. The king is understandably upset and has the scroll cut up and burned. He then sends for Baruch and Jeremiah, but The LORD had hidden them away. God then has Jeremiah dictate another scroll. God's word does not stop being law just because we do not like it. God is God and we are not.

Zedekiah is placed on the throne, fulfilling the prophecy of 36:30. Zedekiah did not follow The LORD. However, he still sent Jehucal and Zephaniah to Jeremiah asking him to pray to The LORD for them. God informs Jeremiah that Pharaoh and his army, who they had a flimsy alliance with, will return to Egypt. The Chaldean army withdraws, and Jeremiah begins heading to the land of Benjamin. At the gate, he is stopped by a guard that accuses him of desertion and is thrown in prison.