

I have Read: *unit VIII*
Jeremiah 1-52
Syllabus: 76-82
Introduction to the Old Testament
223-233

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Religion 302

What Happened: Jeremiah was called to be a prophet while still quite young--in fact he was only twenty. The call came in about the year 627 B.C. in the thirteenth year of Josiah and continued until after the final destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C., a period of about fifty years. (Young, p.223)

The kings who reigned during this period were Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah. (Zedekiah was the king when Lehi and his family left Jerusalem and came to America.) (1 Nephi 1:4) Previously we have noted that the Lord called MANY prophets to warn the Jews (and the Israelites before they were scattered) that unless they repented they would be destroyed. Jeremiah was a prophet of "doom" so to speak. He did not say "if" he said "when" and that destruction was upon them. He was not a popular prophet, therefore. One can attribute the fact of his longevity as a prophet only from the protection that the Lord had promised him. Nevertheless he had to undergo suffering, prison, and lived under almost constant threat of his life.(Jer. 1:19) He was called before he was born (1:5), There was numerous mention of "false" prophets in this reading. It must have been very difficult for the average man of the street to know to whom to listen. The weak could easily have been led astray by the many conflicting doctrines.

2. Why would anyone be reluctant to be a prophet? Anyone NOT at least hesitant about becoming a prophet would not be a very humble person. The thought of being the mouthpiece of the Lord would be a humbling, even a frightening prospect. A knowledgeable man, conversant with the scriptures, would be aware that being a Prophet was sometimes dangerous--even mortally so, and Jeremiah, while he did not mention "fear" to the Lord, might well have felt it at his call. Also a Prophet is always called to call his people to repentance and no one likes to be told he needs to repent. While it is certain that no service to the Lord could be so rewarding as being a prophet, still involved would be suffering and sorrow for the sins of the people he served. Jeremiah must have thrilled when the Lord said to him:"For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land." (1:18) And he certainly needed that reassurance throughout his ministry.

There are so many things I liked about Jeremiah that it is hard to try to "condense" anything ~~enough to~~ ^{and still} do it justice.

In going through the chapters I jotted down some of the reasons the Lord gave through Jeremiah for the destruction of Judah. *Among the many listed although "Jeremiah" are the following:*

1. Not keeping the Sabbath day. (17:23)
2. "Burning incense to other Gods. (19:4)
3. "Filled this place with the blood of innocents." (19:4)
4. "Hardened their necks that they hear not my words." (19:5)
5. Israel became hardened in her iniquity, (like the clay pot)
6. "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so. (5:31)"
7. "The word of the Lord is to them a reproach." (6:10)
8. "Everyone is given to covetness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. (6:13)"
9. "Your burnt offerings are not acceptable nor your sacrifices sweet to me. (6:20)"
10. "Behold ye trust in lying words that cannot profit.
9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other Gods whom ye know not
10. And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? (chapter 7)
11. Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God and worshipped other Gods and served them. (22:13)
12. Ignoring the poor and the needy. (22:14)
13. Passing their sons and daughters through fire of Molech. (Chap. 32)
14. Not obeying the law to free bondsmen and maids after the 7th year. (34:14)

Each chapter is full of the recounting of the sins of Judah and Israel. Especially Judah, but the Lord (to me) when he speaks of his people includes "all of Israel" even though Israel, to some extent has already (at Jeremiah's time) received their scattering. Still, in the last days, of which Jeremiah prophesies, also, Israel will be gathered with Judah--in fact some of Israel will be (is being) gathered BEFORE the Jews.

Chapter 17:1: "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with a point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars."

Tracy often quotes this scripture on his talks on diamond. It seems that even at that date they realized that diamond was the hardest of all substances, and with this hard substance they engraved the sins of Judah upon the horns of the altar--they would not be easy to erase. *Wow! Tell that in class today*

There would have been no occasion for anyone to have said to the Lord: "WHY?" He certainly lays it out all very clearly for them, but even in this extremity he says: ~~(15:19)~~

Chap. 7: 7: (if ye do certain things) then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for every and ever." To the very last he held out the possibility of repentance, "Yet they would not."

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