

**A LOOK AT THE BOOK  
JEREMIAH  
AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION, . . .**

Ralph Porter

George was a "good Christian person."

He was raised in a Christian home.

He attended church from the time he was a small child.

He participated in all the church activities.

He believed all the right doctrines.

He did, as much as he could, everything church people thought he should do.

In spite of all this, he didn't feel very good about himself.

He was afraid of God, and afraid of dying and facing God.

He came to realize that he was trusting in what he himself was able to do to be accepted by God.

- *Maybe he hadn't done enough!*

Finally he realized that he had to stop trusting in himself, and start trusting in what Christ had already done for him.

When he began to trust in Christ, he began to sense the freedom that he was looking for.

Now George is still serving God, but his motive has changed.

Instead of doing it to be accepted by God, he serves God because he loves Him.

The story of "George" has been repeated many, many times.

God is always seeking fellowship with people.

He has established a way by which we can come to enjoy that fellowship.

However, many, like George, try to set up their own way.

They try to please God by way of their religion.

The best example of this search is found in the history of Israel.

Israel wanted to make its own way to God (Rom. 10:4).

Therefore, they failed to find the way which He had given them.

They wanted to prove their own righteousness, but, as always, they were unable to do that.

They sinned and came under God's judgment.

That's how it was in Jeremiah's time.

Israel dedicated itself to ritualistic worship and religious ceremonies, but rejected God.

Jeremiah urged them to trust God rather than themselves.

We have to learn the same lesson.

Religion isn't enough.

We need intimate fellowship with God.

## AUTHOR

God called Jeremiah as His spokesman to the nation.

He warned him in advance that they weren't going to pay attention to him.

However, he was to be faithful in proclaiming God's message, whether the people payed attention or not.

Like the other prophets, Jeremiah lived with continual tension.

He loved God, but at the same time, he loved his country.

This tension came into being because the two had parted ways.

He had to choose between following God or defending his own people.

Jeremiah was from the tribe of Levi.

His family belonged to the priestly order.

His home was in Anathoth, about three miles from Jerusalem.

From childhood on, Jeremiah was familiar with Jerusalem and knew what was happening there.

Israel's throne had been occupied by rebellious men, separated from fellowship with God.

The people followed the example of their kings.

God called Jeremiah when he was barely twenty years old.

He was too young to be a prophet.

In spite of the difficulty, he served God for more than forty years.

He is presented throughout the book as a real human being, not perfect.

We find him struggling inside himself with life's problems.

Notice some of the descriptions of Jeremiah.  
What kind of person can God use to accomplish His purposes?

1:4-6	1:9	9:1	11:21
15:16	20:1-2	20:7-11	26:8
38:6			

Jeremiah decided to serve God.

He prophesied during a period of great apostasy.

They rejected his message and therefore he suffered considerable persecution.

He tried to forget the ministry several times but each time he felt obligated to come back.

When Babylon conquered Jerusalem, he had a chance to leave with the captives.

Instead, he decided to stay to help those who were still in Jerusalem.

After the assassination of Gedaliah, the governor, those who escaped to Egypt took Jeremiah along with them.

There he preached his last message to them.

## **HISTORICAL SITUATION**

### **International situation**

When Jeremiah began his ministry, a world war was approaching.

There was considerable competition between the three main world powers.

Assyria had been in control for 300 years, but was losing control over the other nations.

Babylon was getting stronger all the time.

Egypt wanted its old power back.

They all wanted to control the world.

Babylon attacked and conquered Assyria.

Later, Egypt arrived to try to help Assyria.

Babylonia dominated them both and set up a new empire.

Since Israel was caught in the middle, they suffered from all sides.

The competing nations crossed their national territory to make war.

They only slowed down to demand submission and taxes.

After conquering the two main powers, Babylonia invaded Jerusalem three times.

The last time, Jerusalem was destroyed.

### **National situation**

Israel's rebellion was apparent from the very beginning.

The northern kingdom was judged and taken captive in 722 B.C.

Instead of learning from their example, Judah followed in the same path.

Only two kings faithfully followed Yahweh after the fall of the northern kingdom:  
Hezekiah and Josiah.

Josiah was on the throne when God called Jeremiah.

Josiah's sons, who took over the throne after his death, reveal the real nature of the people's repentance under their father's leadership.

They went right back to their old gods and to their pagan customs.

The invasions from Babylon should have warned them, but they paid no attention.

In 586 B.C., God judged them, sending Babylonia to destroy Jerusalem.

In the meantime, Jeremiah was worried.

*Their national lifestyle was marked by sin and idolatry.*

*They were going through the motions of empty religious ritual.*

They were not in fellowship with God, and didn't really want to be.

The only king interested in pursuing righteousness had just died.

His children were going after pagan deities.

Even the religious leaders of Israel were encouraging the people to worship these pagan gods.

The whole nation was taking part in the pagan festivities.

The people were not taking God into account.

Injustice was on the rise.

The rich became richer; they exploited the poor, widows and orphans.

Apparently nobody even cared about these conditions.

It seems impossible that this situation would exist among God's people.

Hadn't God called them to be a light, in the midst of the other nations?

How could God permit these conditions to continue?

How long would He let it go on like this?

These questions troubled Jeremiah every day.

Let's look at some descriptions Jeremiah uses to depict the situation in Israel:

2:11

2:13

2:32

25:4

25:7

The destruction of Israel was not an arbitrary judgment on God's part.

He was motivated to do something by their sin and idolatry.

Although they were trusting in the temple and in their religious ceremonies, their heart wasn't seeking fellowship with God.

## **PURPOSE AND THEME**

*In the light of this situation, what was Jeremiah's message?*

Announcement of **judgment** in order to bring **repentance**

After the judgment, consolation and encouragement were given, to motivate them to turn back to God.

The book answers the question: **Why has this happened to us?**

God never allows His people to continue living in persistent sin!

Therefore, he sent messengers to warn the people.

In spite of this, they went on in their empty rituals, never looking for Him.

The warning is to give them one more chance to repent.

## **ORGANIZATION**

The book doesn't present the events in historical order, as they occurred.

The author put the subject matter in logical order, according to the main topics God wants them to hear.

The first chapter describes the prophet's call

God informs him that He is about to judge the people of Israel.

Jeremiah is to call them to repentance, although they aren't going to listen.

The majority of the book deals with prophecies concerning Judah (2-45)

He begins with eight messages that condemn the people for their confidence in the temple and in their empty ceremonial ritual, without seeking fellowship with God, nor obedience to His Word (2-20)

The result of their rebellion will be the Babylonian captivity (21-39).

As he announces the coming judgment, the prophet makes clear that there will be restoration afterwards.

Then the people will seek God and will receive the blessings which He has promised to them.

The prophecies regarding Judah end with a description of the life of the people after the destruction of Jerusalem (40-45)

The prophet has a message concerning the other nations around them also (46-51).

They will be judged according to the way they treat Israel.

A series of judgments is described, which will come against the nations that mistreat God's people.

The book ends with an historical commentary that demonstrates how God fulfills his Word.

The preservation of king Jehoiachin indicates that there is still hope for God's people.

## **INTRODUCTION 1**

By way of introduction, Jeremiah identifies himself and tells the basis of his authority.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 1:1-3**

He describes his personal background.

## **HIS CALLING 1:4-19**

He describes God's call.

### **Called 4-5**

His message is not that of his own choosing.

He proclaims the message God commanded him to present.

### **Resistant 6**

Jeremiah really didn't want the job.

He was aware of his own inadequacy and sought to escape.

### **Enabled 7-10**

God makes it clear that He knows Jeremiah well.

His capacity to minister will come from God's presence with him, not from his own skills.

### **Enlightened 11-16**

God uses two illustrations to clarify the nature of Jeremiah's mission:

The almond rod indicates that God will wait no longer.

His judgment is coming soon.

The boiling pot indicates that God will send a damaging judgment which will pour down on His people from the north.

### **Sent 17-19**

God concludes the discussion by issuing the final commission.

Jeremiah is to go and tell the people whatever God tells them.

He forewarns him that they will refuse to listen and will try to fight him.

Nevertheless, he is to be faithful to deliver God's message.

God will protect him.

## **PROPHECIES CONCERNING JUDAH 2-45**

Obedient to God's command, Jeremiah begins to present God's message to Judah.

## **ACCUSATION AND EXHORTATION 2-20**

He first accuses them of their sin and warns them to repent.

### **Eight messages of warning 2:1-19:13**

Jeremiah begins with eight messages to impress them with the seriousness of the course they are following.

These represent eight final barricades to try to stop Israel from total destruction at the end of the road.

#### Marriage on the rocks 2-3:5

1<sup>st</sup> message of warning: Jeremiah uses the example of a marriage on the rocks as a graphic example of Israel's dangerous relationship with God.

The marriage began well.

However, the wife became unfaithful.

She sought after other lovers and left her husband.

Thus the marriage was ruined.

In spite of the wife's unfaithfulness, God's love continues and He awaits her return.

#### Follow the leader 3:6-6:30

2<sup>nd</sup> message of warning: Uses Israel's captivity as a warning to alert Judah.

Judah witnessed this demonstration of the danger of unfaithfulness.

A little over 100 years earlier, Israel was destroyed by Assyria.

In spite of Israel's example, Judah followed the same path.

She refused to repent.

Therefore, Judah merited more serious discipline than Israel.

God will bring a foreign nation to judge them.

#### The gate of the temple 7-10

3<sup>rd</sup> message of warning: Accuses them of false confidence in the temple and failure to obey God's voice.

Although they refused to submit to God, they kept offering their sacrifices.

They were trusting in the temple and in their sacrifices for protection.

God doesn't want that kind of sacrifice.

He wants love and submission to His authority.

In spite of the presence of the temple, God will destroy it and judge His people.

#### The broken covenant 11-12

4<sup>th</sup> message of warning: condemns them for violating the conditions of the Mosaic covenant.

The enjoyment of God's blessing is based on submission to God's authority.

Since the people were in rebellion, God will punish them.

#### Ruined and broken 13

5<sup>th</sup> message of warning: Jeremiah uses two object lessons, the linen waste band and the broken jug, to demonstrate the effects of the coming judgment.

The linen waist band, or girdle (1-11), was intimate clothing, worn against the body.

It demonstrates the close relationship God desired to maintain between His people and Himself.

However, it was separated from Him.

The result is that it became ruined and totally useless.

So it will be with them.

Their separation from God will make them useless to Him.

The symbol of the broken jug (12-27) was based on a popular saying, *"Every jug will be filled with wine!"*

The saying refers to a time of prosperity when every jug would be filled.

Jeremiah says that they will be full, but not like they think.

They will be drunk.

They will become like a bunch of full jugs, carried by one person on his back.

They bang against each other and break, spilling their contents everywhere.

Judah also is going to be broken and scattered.

Empty vessels and cracked ground 14-15

6<sup>th</sup> message of warning: uses a real drought as an illustration to demonstrate the certainty of coming judgment.

God will leave the land desolate because of their sin.

The unmarried prophet 16-17

7<sup>th</sup> message of warning: uses the prophet's celibacy as an object lesson.

God prohibits him from marrying.

He may not participate in their mourning, nor in their rejoicing.

Because of their sin, and the coming judgment, he should separate from them completely.

The potter's rights 18-19

8<sup>th</sup> message of warning: contains a final appeal to repentance.

Observation of life around the potter's house provides two distinct lessons for God's people.

First, it's noted that the potter makes the vessels according to his plan (18).

When they didn't turn out right, he destroys them and starts over.

God is working with Israel according to His will.

He invites her to repent.

When she rejects His invitation, He judges her and starts to work on her again.

The second lesson learned at the potter's house is that hardened clay becomes useless (19:1-13).

Jeremiah buys one of the jars.

He smashes it in front of the people.

He compares Israel to a damaged jug.

It cannot be repaired.

The people of that generation have become hard and will not return to Him.

Therefore, He will break them, as one would break a useless pottery jug.

These eight messages were delivered to Judah because they have turned to sin and idolatry.

They have hardened their hearts and stiffened their necks, so as not to hear God's voice, nor obey His law.

They only want Him as a life preserver, useful for emergencies.

Therefore, God will curse them, in order to correct them and bring them back to Himself.

#### **Israel's response 19:14-20:18**

Following the messages of warning, Judah's response to the warnings is described.

Condition declared 19:14-15

Though they should have repented, they refused to listen and obey.

Upon return from Topheth, an area to the south of Jerusalem known for Baal worship and child sacrifices, he declares that due to their stiff-necked condition, God is going to destroy them.

Judah will not submit to God's authority.

She rejects His Word.

Therefore, she will be destroyed.

Condition demonstrated 20:1-6

This condition is illustrated by Passhur's treatment of Jeremiah.

As chief officer in the house of the Lord, Passhur was responsible to maintain order in the temple.

When he rejected the message of Jeremiah, he represented the people.

This was an official rejection of God's message and messenger (1-2).

Passhur ordered that Jeremiah be beaten and placed in stocks.

Even the beating symbolized the rejection of the message.

He was then placed in stocks, two pieces of wood that bound neck, hands and feet.

They would leave the prisoner's body bent all night without being able to move.

Jeremiah, as God's spokesman, delivered His response to this rejection.

Because of the seriousness of the offense, Passhur's name is changed to "terror on every side."

His name would be a reminder and he would be a symbol of the coming Babylonian captivity.

Condition lamented 20:7-18

Jeremiah is not happy about the role God has given to him.

He laments Judah's sad condition.

He wants to leave his ministry but he can't.

He is compelled to go on.

He would prefer not to have been born so he would not suffer.

He submits to God's will but wishes God had called someone else.

## **PREDICTION OF CAPTIVITY 21-39**

The second major section of prophecies directed to Judah and Jerusalem deals specifically with the captivity.

He moves from exhorting them to repent, to a direct warning that judgment is coming.

While there is still the possibility of repentance, which would bring restoration, these message are founded on the assumption that they will not repent.

### **Eight messages of judgment 21-29**

Jeremiah delivers a second series of eight messages which inform them concerning God's plan to send captivity upon His people.

The messages are designed to prepare them for what is about to come and to demonstrate that God is in control.

It is especially important that they be aware of God's plan, so that they will trust Him when the time of restoration arrives.

Answer for Zedekiah 21-22

1<sup>st</sup> message of judgment: an answer to Zedekiah's question concerning what they should do about Babylon.

Jeremiah answers that God Himself is fighting against Judah.

He warns them to submit to Babylon.

Those who submit will survive; those who fight will die.

Rather than resist Babylon, they should repent.

The consequences of refusal to obey are given because He knows they won't listen.

Therefore, He will defeat them and send them into captivity.

Against spiritual leaders 23

2<sup>nd</sup> message of judgment: a message against the spiritual leaders of God's people.

Rather than care for the people as they should and lead them into God's ways, they are false priests and prophets.

They promote sin among God's people.

Therefore they will be judged.

#### Two baskets of figs 24

3<sup>rd</sup> message of judgment: derived from an illustration of two bunches of figs, one batch good and the other, rotten.

The good figs were those who had been taken captive.

The bad figs were those who remained in the land.

The people left behind thought the opposite.

They thought they were better because they were not taken captive.

God explained that the workers gather the good fruit.

The bad ones are left behind to rot.

#### Prophecy of seventy years 25:1-14

4<sup>th</sup> message of judgment: predicts seventy years of captivity in Babylon.

#### Cup of God's wrath 25:13-18

5<sup>th</sup> message of judgment: uses the illustration of a cup of wine to foretell God's judgment of all the nations.

#### In the temple court 26

6<sup>th</sup> message of judgment: message in the court of the temple.

He warns them of the danger of refusing to hear God.

#### Sign of the yokes 27-28

7<sup>th</sup> message of judgment: uses the illustration of yokes to demonstrate that God will send Israel and her allies into captivity.

Another prophet, Hananiah, contradicted Jeremiah's message, promising restoration within two years.

Jeremiah joins him in wishing that it were so.

However, God's Word is what matters.

The fulfillment is more important than the words.

Hananiah has created a false hope.

He has broken the wooden yoke, but God will replace it with an "iron" one.

Jeremiah declares judgment on Hananiah for his false message and reaffirms the message that God is sending the Babylonians.

#### Letter to Babylon 29

8<sup>th</sup> message of judgment: sent in a letter to Babylon.

The letter advises the captives there to settle down for a while.

God promises to restore them but not until the seventy years are completed.

The eight messages of judgment combine to demonstrate that because of their sin and rebellion, God is going to judge Judah.

Jerusalem will be destroyed.

In spite of the false assurances of the prophets, the captives will remain in Babylon for seventy years.

They might as well settle in Babylon and wait to see the restoration God promised to send after the seventy years are over.

### **Future restoration 30-33**

The strong prediction of judgment requires a reconfirmation of the promise of restoration.

God has not abandoned nor forgotten His people.

He will fulfill His promise to them.

His covenants which promise the land, the seed and the blessing will be fulfilled.

So also will His covenant with David.

Before Israel can experience the blessings God has promised, they must return to Him.

God's plan to bless His people is reconfirmed and explained.

Jeremiah uses this background so that the people might realize the significance of what is happening.

The restoration of Israel is explained against a backdrop of suffering.

The immediate application is related to the Babylonian invasion.

It goes further, however, to describe Israel's experience in the tribulation.

The promised restoration won't take place, in an absolute sense, until sometime yet in the future.

The purpose of the tribulation is to serve as a means of preparing God's people for the restoration (30:1-16).

God wants them to realize that both their present suffering and their future restoration are from Him.

The pagan nations are not in control; God is in control.

God wants to bless His people.

However, before He can bless His people, He must first discipline them, so that they will return to Him.

Without repentance there could be no blessing.

When they turn back to Him, He will bless them.

After the time of corrective suffering, God begins the restoration of His people (30:17-33:26).

Among the blessings He will send are those which He has promised in the Palestinian covenant (30:17-31:26).

He will restore them to the land He promised them.

The land will produce fruit in abundance.

As a result the people will rejoice in the blessing of the land.

In addition to the land, God promised Abraham that He would bless them.

The promises of the new covenant deal with God's fulfillment of that part of the covenant (31:27-40).

God is going to give them a new attitude so that they will seek Him.

The promise is as certain of fulfillment as the stars in the sky.

As long as the stars remain in place, Israel can be sure that God will fulfill His promise to them.

The troubled times in which Jeremiah lived were not likely to convince Israel that God would fulfill His promises to Judah.

Therefore, Jeremiah buys Hanamel's field as a demonstration that God will restore them to the land (32:1-44).

He did this in about 587 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar is attacking Jerusalem.

Jeremiah is in jail for preaching that the city is going to be taken.

Suddenly Jeremiah invests in real estate.

He would appear to be a bit crazy; or, he knows something that others don't know!

He had a legal right to buy it; but, why now?

The significance of His action is demonstrated by what he does with the deed (32:14).

He puts it in a clay jar to store for a long time.

The lesson shows the certainty that God will restore them to the land.

That deed will be valuable again. But not yet!

It will be seventy years before it will be useful; but, it will be useful!

God will fulfill His promise and restore His people to the land.

Finally, the terms of the Davidic covenant are included in the promise of restoration (33:1-26).

A summary statement of the restoration of the land is repeated.

Then God promises to place a descendant of David on the throne again.

Object lessons from day and night, from the stars, and from the quantity of the sand are presented as guarantees that God will finally restore His people and fulfill the Davidic covenant.

The promise of restoration emphasizes that God will fulfill each of His unconditional covenants with Israel.

He will restore their land.

He will restore their blessing.

He will put His Spirit within them.

Also, He will restore His king upon the throne.

## Two contrasts 34-38

Before their restoration, however, He must deal with the present reality.

First, they must be disciplined to bring them to repentance.

Immediate judgment is coming to turn them back to God so He can bless them (34-38).

In the midst of this scene of judgment, two exceptions to the general pattern of unbelief and disobedience stand out.

They make the guilt of the people even more notable.

The first contrast described is that of unfaithful Israel and the faithful Recabites (34:1-35:19).

The contrast begins with a message concerning the captivity (34:1-7).

Nebuchadnezzar and his army have arrived.

They are attacking Jerusalem.

The final result of the attack will be captivity.

*Why would God allow His people to be taken into captivity?*

The reason is that they have broken the covenant (34:8-22).

In spite of the promise made to God, their obedience didn't last.

They have gone back on their word.

Therefore, destruction and captivity will come against them.

In contrast to Judah's unfaithfulness to their covenant, the example of the faithful Recabites is presented (35:1-19).

The Recabites were related to the Kenites, a tribe present in Canaan when Abraham arrived.

They were allies of Israel who had no land of their own but wandered about in the fields.

Jonadab, their forefather, rode with Jehu in his chariot when Jehu fought the descendants of Ahab and the followers of Baal.

He was presented as an ally of Jehu and as a faithful supporter of Yahweh, against Baal.

Jeremiah tempts the Recabites to drink wine with him (1-5).

There is nothing inherently wrong with his request.

Nothing could be more innocent, of itself, than obeying God's messenger in His house by doing something which God allows them to do.

In spite of the apparently innocent invitation, the Recabites refuse (6-11).

They remember Jonadab's command not to drink wine.

Even though God had not prohibited the practice, the Recabites obey their father's command.

God does not praise them for the content of their rules.

He praises them, and uses them as an example, because they have remained faithful to their father's teaching.

Jeremiah uses their example to teach Israel (12-16).

These were not Israelites.

There is no evidence that they followed Yahweh.

Israel should have taught them the importance of submission and obedience to Yahweh.

Instead, they are used as an example for Israel.

Just as there is a contrast in their conduct, so there is a contrast in their destiny (17-19).

Judah will experience God's judgment.

The Recabites are promised preservation and participation in the blessing God will send His people in the future.

The second contrast Jeremiah points to is that of unfaithful Israel and the faithful servant (36-38:28).

Again he begins with the judgment of Israel for their unfaithfulness (36-38:6).

The first cause of judgment is Jehoiakim's burning of the scroll (36).

Later, when Babylon came against Jerusalem, the people called on Egypt for help (37:1-10).

Jeremiah's message of judgment was rejected and he was arrested unjustly (37:11-38:6).

Finally God's people threw His messenger into a cistern, where he sank into the mud.

The contrast presented is based on the care shown for God's servant by the Ethiopian servant (38:7-13).

He was not even part of God's people.

He was only a foreign slave from a pagan country (7a).

Nevertheless, he recognized the injustice which had been done and was willing to risk his own life to save God's servant (7b-13).

Because of the servant's care for God's servant, he is promised protection at the time of judgment (15-18a).

He stands out as an example to Israel, God's people, because he, a pagan, trusted Yahweh when God's own people rejected Him (18b).

After presenting these two contrasts, and in part because of what they represent, Jeremiah delivers a final warning to submit to Babylon.

Zedekiah once again asks what he should do.

The answer has not changed.

If he submits to Babylon, God will bless him.

Zedekiah's fear wins out and he, therefore, experiences the judgment God predicted.

## **Fulfilled judgment 39**

The judgment is fulfilled just as Jeremiah had foretold (1-10).

By way of contrast, Jeremiah's submission to Babylon is rewarded as promised (11-14).

The blessing also reaches Ebed-Melech who is saved because of His trust in God and kindness to Jeremiah (15-18).

## **MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM 40-45**

Following the defeat of Jerusalem, only the poorest of the people stay behind in the land.

Jeremiah's ministry continues among these people.

### **Release of Jeremiah 40:1-6**

Nebuzaradan, captain of the king's body guard, is sent to release Jeremiah.

He recognizes that the reason they defeated Judah is because God delivered His people into their hands on account of their rebellion (1-3).

Jeremiah's role is recognized.

He may choose wherever he prefers to live.

He chooses to stay behind where he is needed (4-6).

### **Government of Gedaliah 40:7-41:18**

Gedaliah was named governor over the land.

He was obviously placed there by God.

His grandfather, Shaphan, was the secretary who told Josiah about the book of the law (2 Ki. 22:10).

His father, Ahikam, protected Jeremiah from death after the sermon in the temple (26:24).

Since Gedaliah was of Jewish origin, yet named governor by Nebuchadnezzar, he must have been one of those who believed Jeremiah and submitted to Babylon (7-9).

God apparently rewarded him for his faith and obedience (10-12).

Although Gedaliah feared God and demonstrated submission to His authority, there was one major failure in his rule (13-16).

When Johanan warned him of the plot to kill him, rather than seek God's will, he did what he wanted to do.

He and all the people in the land suffered the consequences because he failed to seek God's will first (41:1-18).

### **Escape to Egypt 42-43:7**

Fear of the Babylonians convinced the people in the land to escape to Egypt.

They inquired of Jeremiah to find out what God wanted them to do (42:1-6)

After ten days of waiting, God responds, but because of their fear, they had already made up their minds (42:7-22).

Though God told them to stay, they left anyway and took Jeremiah with them by force (43:1-7).

## **Judgment in Egypt 43:8-44:30**

God's judgment reaches them in Egypt.

They thought they would be safe there.

Babylonia wouldn't attack Egypt on account of them!

Jeremiah predicts their destruction there (43:8-44:14).

Instead of repenting, the people become stubborn and rebel (15-19).

They even blame the fall of Jerusalem on the fact that they stopped worshiping the queen of heaven.

With this claim, Jeremiah loses his patience.

He reminds them that idolatry was the cause of the previous judgment (20-23).

Therefore God will again judge them and destroy them there (24-30).

## **Message to Baruch 45**

A special message for Baruch, Jeremiah's assistant, is appended to the prophecy concerning Judah.

While it contains a message for Baruch and other servants of God concerning the desire for personal gain, it also reveals to Judah how deeply God felt a sense of personal loss because of the judgment He sent.

He still cares for them.

God gently warns Baruch concerning his condition.

He was seeking personal gain. God warns him not to seek it.

Earthly rewards are always temporary.

How could Baruch be seeking personal gain in the light of what is about to happen to his people?

Instead of complaining about what he doesn't have, Baruch should praise God for His grace which is about to save his life.

The nation will be destroyed, but Baruch will be protected.

## **PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE NATIONS 46-51**

After demonstrating that God is in control of Judah (2-45), he demonstrates that He is also in control of the nations of the world.

This second major division describes the judgment of God which is about to come on all the nations.

God has judged His people because of their lack of faithfulness and holiness.

In the case of the pagan nations, the basis of judgment is different.

He judges them because of their treatment of Israel (Gen. 12:3), and because of excessive moral degradation and arrogance.

## **Introduction 46:1**

**Judgment against Egypt 46:2-28**

**Judgment against Philistia and the Coast 47**

**Judgment against Moab 48**

**Judgment against Ammon 49:1-6**

**Judgment against Edom 49:7-22**

**Judgment against Damascus 49:23-27**

**Judgment against Kedar and Hazor 49:28-33**

**Judgment against Elam 49:34-39**

**Judgment against Babylon 50-51**

Babylon is given special treatment because of its attack against Judah.

Babylon was God's instrument of judgment on His people.

He used them for His purposes.

However, they did it arrogantly.

They wanted to destroy His people.

They did not submit to Him, nor show proper restraint (as per Saddam Hussein!)

Therefore, God will judge them also.

## **HISTORICAL APPENDIX 52**

The book concludes with an historical appendix which demonstrates that God fulfills His Word.

Three events from Jeremiah's lifetime demonstrate that truth.

The three events have a direct relationship to the Davidic covenant.

### **DEFEAT OF ZEDEKIAH 52:1-11**

The story of Zedekiah demonstrates that God sent judgment against him because of his sin.

He was disqualified as king and removed from office due to his disobedience.

This is in agreement with what God had taught in the Davidic covenant:

Enjoyment of the right to rule on David's throne at any time in history was based on submission to God's authority.

### **DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM 52:12-30**

A further result of their sin was the destruction of the city.

Babylon takes control of the city, takes most of the people captive and leaves a small, poor remnant to work the land.

God has disciplined His people as He said He would, in order to bring them to repentance.

## **PRESERVATION OF JEHOIACHIN 52:31-34**

The final story deals with Jehoiachin, the legitimate heir to David's throne.

In spite of the destruction of the city and the captivity, he is well cared for in Babylon.

Though God has judged His people, His purpose is corrective.

It is a sign of His love, not of their rejection.

At the right time they will be restored.

Jehoiachin is left in Babylon as a visible testimony of God's love and of their hope for the future.

God will again fulfill His promise and restore His people.

## **MAIN THEMES**

### **Theological lessons:**

God hasn't finished with His people (Israel) yet.  
When they return to Him, He still promises to restore them.

God's attitude concerning sin  
God's love for His people, even when they fail Him.  
God's discipline is applied to correct His straying people.

Religion and Ceremony

### **Practical lessons:**

#### **Relationship to God's people in the 21st century**

Relationship to us as God's people.

How are we similar?  
How are we different?

National people of God-Israel  
Ecclesiastical people of God-the church

The two are not to be confused.  
Israel and the church are distinct  
God will fulfill His unconditional covenants to Israel-*not* to us.

Both are visibly present as God's people.

Both contain many unregenerate members, as visible entities.

God demands a holy life, as a testimony.

A holy God demands a holy people. "*Be ye holy, for I am holy!*"

#### **Relationship to pagan nations today**

How do these warnings apply to kings, etc., today?

Many see these warnings as warnings to government today.

God judges all people.

Unregenerate people cannot live a holy life.

Need to trust God, then obey Him.

**FAITH VS. TOKENISM**

People are willing to do all kinds of things to please God, but they will not trust Him.

Israel—unbelief, disobedience, but always offered their sacrifices.

Latin American Catholicism—unbelief, disobedience, but tremendous processions

U.S. Protestantism—unbelief, disobedience, but offerings, church attendance, etc.

What other examples are there in the U.S. today?

*Do we have any evangelical rituals? What are they? What's the danger?*

External rituals of worship aren't enough!

God wants intimate communion that we enjoy when we trust Him.

What does God want? Faith or ceremony?

**He who trusts God in truth will desire to please Him.**

**God wants us to love Him and trust Him.**