



# JEREMIAH

**DECEMBER 2017**

Read on your own or with others,  
which ever you prefer.

This leaflet is just a brief overview of the 'big picture' of this book. If you have been reading the Bible for some time you will be aware there is much more to it than you'll find here.

If you are new to reading the Bible don't worry too much if there are details you do not quite get at the moment - focus on the 'big picture'.

## **JEREMIAH – INTRODUCTION**

Jeremiah was a prophet of God who lived around 600 years before the birth of Jesus. He ministered in the time leading up to the Babylonian invasion of Judah and the later fall of Jerusalem.

The northern kingdom of Israel had been conquered by Assyria in 722 BC. Now, just over 100 years later, the Babylonians, under King Nebuchadnezzar, would destroy Jerusalem and the temple and take many exiles back with them to Babylon.

Jeremiah warns the people that the Babylonians were God's instrument of judgement and that it was useless to resist. He also brings the comfort of God's promises of hope. These speak of a return from exile and ultimately of a new king in David's line.

Jeremiah was a priest (1:1). He was called by God to the role of prophet (1:5). Yet, he struggled with this call and the hardships it brought. He is not a bold, strong man doing remarkable things for God. Rather, he is a weak person doing amazing things in the strength that God provides. As such he is an encouragement to us all.

## **JEREMIAH – OUTLINE**

### **CHAPTERS 1 – 29: WARNING OF JUDGMENT**

In these chapters Jeremiah speaks about the judgement that God will bring on Judah.

Why was judgment coming?

*...my people have exchanged their glorious God for worthless idols.”  
Jeremiah 2:11 (NIVUK 2011)*

What should the people do?

*Whoever stays in this city will die by the sword, famine or plague. But whoever goes out and surrenders to the Babylonians who are besieging you will live; they will escape with their lives. Jeremiah 21:9 (NIVUK 2011)*

Is there hope for the future?

*'The days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. Jeremiah 23:5 (NIVUK 2011)*

## **CHAPTERS 30 – 36: RESTORATION AND REJECTION**

Here we look past the time of judgment to God's promises of deliverance and salvation. On one level they speak about the return from exile that will happen after the 70 years promised in Jeremiah 29:10.

*This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: 'When I bring them back from captivity, the people... will once again use these words: "The LORD bless you, you prosperous city, you sacred mountain." Jeremiah 31:23 (NIVUK 2011)*

Yet, God intends us to understand more here. For instance, Jeremiah 31:31-34 is clearly a reference to what God would do through Jesus long after the return from exile (1 Corinthians 11:25).

In the face of such promises how would Judah respond? In Chapters 34-36 we are shown how the people rejected God's word.

## **CHAPTERS 37 – 45: JERUSALEM FALLS**

The next section describes the fall of Jerusalem. At its heart we see a clear rejection of God's prophet and God's word. This rejection reaches its pinnacle when Zedekiah throws Jeremiah, God's prophet, into prison. Ironically, it is not until the arrival of the Babylonian General, the leader of an ungodly army, that Jeremiah is set free.

## **CHAPTERS 46 – 51: NOT FINISHED YET**

Is that it? With the fall of Jerusalem has God's plan ended? With the destruction of God's temple, has God been defeated? You can imagine these were questions that would have been flying around in Jeremiah's day.

The final section of Jeremiah shows us that God is still in control. The surrounding nations that have opposed God's people will be judged and Babylon, a picture of all that opposes God, will be destroyed forever (Jeremiah 51:64).

## **CHAPTERS 52: PICTURE OF GRACE**

The book ends with an account of the fall of Jerusalem and then a short, but beautiful demonstration of God's grace.

Jehoiakim, the King of Judah who had chopped up and burnt God's word (Jeremiah 36), had been taken into captivity and thrown into prison. However, he hadn't been forgotten by God. He is released by Awel-Marduk, king of Babylon and lives in honour and provision till the day of his death.

## **ASKING THE QUESTIONS THE BIBLE WANTS YOU TO ASK**

What does this book teach you about Jesus? (Luke 24:45-47)

What does this book teach you about yourself? (James 1:23 & 2 Tim 3:16-17)

How were you encouraged? (2 Tim 3:16-17)

How were you corrected? (Romans 15:4)

What difference do the truths of this book make in your life (Matthew 7:24-27)