

**Bible Study • By Faith – An In-depth look at Hebrews 11**  
**Lesson #48 • Hebrews 11:35b-38**  
**“Some Died by Stoning”**  
**Life & Times of Jeremiah • Part 1 of 6**  
**• H A N D O U T •**

► Last Time: We looked at the story of Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath. The story of the Widow was selected to fulfill the list in Hebrews 11, verse 35, which commends the faithful who **were victorious over their circumstances and the women who received their dead back to life. That list also commends the faith of those “being stoned to death.”**

We know that Zechariah, the grandfather of Hezekiah, was stoned to death between the altar and the Temple, and Naboth was stoned to death by Jezebel's henchmen so that King Ahab could turn Naboth's vineyard into a vegetable garden. But, the one chosen for **this study** is the prophet Jeremiah. Even though Scripture doesn't tell us how he died, long-standing Jewish tradition is quite emphatic that he was stoned to death. Also, since Jeremiah's life and times overlap so many of our heroes of the faith, including Daniel and the King Josiah, selecting him as the next person to study seemed logical.

► *Note: We are studying the man, Jeremiah, and this is not intended to be verse-by-verse analysis of the OT book of Jeremiah.* A study of the book of Jeremiah is often overlooked for several reasons: It is huge, consisting of 52 chapters, and records, in detail, Jeremiah's sermons and prophecies. While it clearly shows us the heart of God for His people **it is a difficult book because there is no logical or chronological order to it, making it almost impossible to outline.** To put it in chronological order, creates a bewildering zig-zag course throughout the book. [*IE: Zedekiah's 10<sup>th</sup> year goes from chapter 32 to chapter 52, back to chapter 10, then to chapter 33.*] **However there are great rewards:** this study shows us Jeremiah's steadfast faith in the face of significant personal cost, and we are given a front row seat to the unfolding political drama as Judah is exiled to Babylon. We will also find some of the best restoration promises in the entire Bible. **We will track Jeremiah's life by following the chronological lives of the final five Kings of Judah.**

### Setting the Stage for the Life & Times of Jeremiah ...

Jeremiah 1:1 • *The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth, in the territory of Benjamin.*

Q: What does this opening verse tell us about Jeremiah?

• MAJOR EVENTS TIMELINE FOR JEREMIAH'S LIFE •

BC DATES	KINGS	DATES	SIGNIFICANT EVENTS - SAME GENERAL PERIOD
639-609	Josiah – Reigned for 30 years	626	The call of Jeremiah
609	Jehoahaz – Reigned for 3 months	612	The Fall of Nineveh in Assyria
609-597	Jehoiakim – Reigned for 11+ years	609	Death of Josiah at Megiddo
597	Jehoiachin – Reigned for 3 months	605	• The Battle of Carchemish and the Fall of the Assyrian Empire followed by the first siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, in which Daniel was exiled.
597-586	Zedekiah – reigned for 11+ years		
597 • Second Siege of Jerusalem • 832 more Jews deported to Babylon, including Ezekiel			
586 • Gedaliah appointed as Satrap of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Assassinated a few months later. Assassins fled to Egypt forcing Jeremiah to go with them, where he died.			
588-586 • Third & Final siege of Jerusalem. All able bodied deported to Babylon. Exile to last 70 years.			

**God Commissions Jeremiah to Public Ministry ...**

*Jeremiah 1:2-3 • The Word of the Lord came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, and through the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, down to the fifth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah king of Judah, when the people of Jerusalem went into exile.*

Q: What was the time interval for Jeremiah receiving the “Word of the Lord?”

Q: What is significant about the time interval?

**Jeremiah reveals the Word of the Lord  
Because of the nature of the contents, it probably was a vision ...**

*Jeremiah 1:5 • The Word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."*

Q: What is significant about the Lord speaking directly to Jeremiah, calling him to be a prophet?

Q: What does the Word the Lord spoke to Jeremiah tell us about his calling to be a prophet?

Q: What does it mean that he was called to be a prophet to the Nations?

### Like so many prophets before him, he expresses being inadequate for the work...

*Jeremiah 1:6-10* • "Ah, Sovereign Lord," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child."  
But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord. Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant."

Q: Jeremiah said, "I am only a child." Just how old was he when the Word of the Lord came to him?

Q: How does the Lord respond to Jeremiah?

Q: What action did the Lord take toward Jeremiah in this vision?

Q: Why did the Lord touch Jeremiah's mouth?

### Summary of Jeremiah's training as a prophet ...

► This next passage represents Jeremiah's training, preparing him for God's work. Surprisingly, his lessons are simple. Instead of them involving mysterious wheels like the dreams of Ezekiel or the flaming seraphs like the visions of Isaiah, Jeremiah is simply told to look and see, after which the Lord asks him, **"What do you see, Jeremiah?"** Then the Lord begins to tell Jeremiah the meaning of what he is seeing. It is the same format the Lord will use to give His warnings of Judgment against Judah.

► *Jeremiah 1: 11-16* • The Lord said to me, "From the north disaster will be poured out on all who live in the land. I am about to summon all the peoples of the northern kingdoms," declares the Lord. "Their kings will come and set up their thrones in the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem; they will come against all her surrounding walls and against all the towns of Judah. I will pronounce my judgments on my people because of their wickedness in forsaking me, in burning incense to other gods and in worshiping what their hands have made."

Q: Why would Judah have to be told God was displeased with their Nation's sinful behavior? Didn't they already know that their journey into pagan worship was making God angry?

► But Judah does not heed Israel's plight and in the next passage God shares His heartbreak with his prophet.

*Jeremiah 2:1-3 · The word of the Lord came to me: "Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem:" "I remember the devotion of your youth, how, as a bride, you loved me and followed me through the desert, through a land not sown. Israel was holy to the Lord, the firstfruits of his harvest; all who devoured her were held guilty, and disaster overtook them," declares the Lord.*

Q: What exactly is the Most High God doing in this passage?

► The ingratitude of Israel and her rebellion toward the Lord is staggering. By this time the nation of Judah has seen a multitude of miracles from the hand of the Lord and He has provided for them and forgiven them without faltering in His promises and commitment toward them. The Lord asks the question: **“What injustice have your fathers found in me?”** Of course there are no injustices to be found in the Lord. Israel – the House of Jacob – cannot bring any charges against the Most High God. Instead, the Lord brings charges against the House of Jacob.

The Lord goes about this as a Prosecutor would when he made an opening statement at a trial. In this “opening” statement, God states that His people has committed two sins:

*Jeremiah 2:12-13 · Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the Lord. "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.*

Q: What are the two sins for which Israel is guilty?

- 1.
- 2.

**► The Lord continues his case against Israel saying that God's people look to Egypt and Assyria for their help and forsake the LORD in the process.**

Q: Why is it especially egregious that Israel turned to Egypt & Assyria rather than to God for help?

**The Lord returns to the issue of Judah's unrestrained pursuit of false gods this time using strong exceptionally vivid language ...**

► The Lord described Israel – the house of Jacob – as, first, a wanton prostitute, then, second, as a weed that is foul-smelling, and third, as a person who is so dirty and that no lye or soap can make them clean again. But God's people have stopped realizing just how filthy they have become. They seem to be in total denial. Their sense of what is evil has become desensitized.

The Lord asks: **"How can you say, 'I am not defiled; I have not run after the Baals?'"** He asks: **"Just where then are these gods you made for yourselves? Let them come if they can save you when you are in trouble!"**

God then summarizes the problem between Him and His people: **"In times of trouble you turn to Me, pleading, but not out of true repentance, but out of a desire to escape present consequences. Instead of listening to My prophets, you murder them with your swords. Rather than humbling yourselves, you say: 'We are lords; we do not need to humble ourselves before the living God.'** Sadly, the Lord concludes: **"My people have forgotten me, days without number."**

Q: How did these Covenant people of God get to this point?

Q: Were they serious about believing they were not defiled by their pursuit of the Baals and all that entailed in their worship practices?

Q: Why would they say "We are lords; we do not need to humble ourselves before the living God?"

Q: What would cause them to either ignore, or fail to learn from the destruction of the Northern Kingdom of Israel?

Q: What can we, today, learn from this ancient tragedy?

Grace = \_\_\_\_\_

Mercy = \_\_\_\_\_

**So ... We end this study-lesson with a sad note from the Lord:  
"My people have forgotten me, days without number."  
But ... We will begin the next study-lesson with the Lord's Invitation:  
'YET, RETURN TO ME!'**



**Next Time ◆ Lesson #49  
"Jeremiah – Part 2 of 6"**

