

DAILY BIBLE READING PLAN

05-21-2023 // WEEK 20 NOTES

This past week, you've finished **Jeremiah 1 - 25**. Here are a few highlights:

All, we are now in Jeremiah, commonly nicknamed "the weeping prophet." He is a prophet to the southern kingdom during its demise and the forthcoming judgment by God who uses the Babylonian empire as his instrument of judgment. His prophecies give the reasons for God's judgment and the persecution he personally faced. Later, he will prophesy about their return from their captivity in Babylon. Here is an overview of 1-25, up through today's readings:

- **Jeremiah Chapter 1:** It's the introduction. Note **verse 5**: a strong **pro-life verse**. God called Jeremiah in his mother's womb. And the message given to him from God regarding what he wanted him to say. God promises to protect him amidst great pushback from the people.
- **Chapters 2 - 6:** God/Jeremiah compares Judah's sin to spiritual adultery and a faithless spouse. God calls on Judah to repent, but it won't. Jeremiah warns of impending disaster from Babylon if they don't repent. They are hardhearted in their sin (sound familiar?). God rejects his chosen people.
- **Chapters 7 - 10:** Judah has an improper reliance on the temple, believing because it's the place where the one true God is worshiped that God would never allow it to be destroyed and his people taken into captivity. Judah is also guilty of rejecting God's law, the Torah, which Josiah had rediscovered a few decades earlier. Judah lives deceitfully against God and Jeremiah. The leaders despise Jeremiah's constant message of repentance or God's judgment will come. **The charge of idolatry is given to Judah and the promise of exile is going to occur.**
- **Chapters 11 - 22:** Jeremiah is surprised by the **strong opposition of the people**. He just wants to be faithful to God. He is hated by the leaders and the people. Later, you will see that he is beaten. Put into stocks. Derided. And despised. His response is oftentimes to weep over his distress, thus the nickname "the weeping prophet." He questions the day he was born. **He even questions his calling.**

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I love the reality that **the Bible never fudges on the humanity of its major characters.** Yet, Jeremiah also wishes God to do vengeance on all his persecutors. He also praises God that he is in control of everything, calling **God the “Potter” and Judah “the clay.”** God can do with us whatever he wishes to do. He confronts the kings and the false prophets for saying that God would never take his people into captivity as Jeremiah is threatening. Jeremiah says these false prophets say, **“Peace, peace, where there is no peace.”**

He also **confronts them for speaking a soft message from God that only heals superficially.** These chapters are really powerful for us today. A strong message from God will demand confrontation, conviction of sin, repentance, and a new life. Are there messengers from God today who offer a message of peace with God where there is no peace? And when there are prophets from God who truly confront sin and righteousness, are they dismissed? Even persecuted?

- **Chapters 23-25:** Jeremiah confronts and challenges the 1) false prophets who say that God would never allow his people to be overcome by such a wicked nation as Babylon. They just preached peace and prosperity and not God’s judgment on sin. 2) how Jeremiah opposed the people of Judah. They didn’t want to hear his negative message either. 3) how Jeremiah opposed the false beliefs of the people, how they had adopted Canaanite religious practices that were not of God.

As you continue to read through Jeremiah, ask yourselves these questions:

1. *What are the parallels of Judah’s sins for today?*
2. *Who are true and false prophets? Shepherds?*
3. *How hard is it to be popular and also true to God’s call to truth?*