

# The Prophetic Calling of Jeremiah

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Jeremiah 1: 5.



“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you;  
before you were born I sanctified you;  
I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”  
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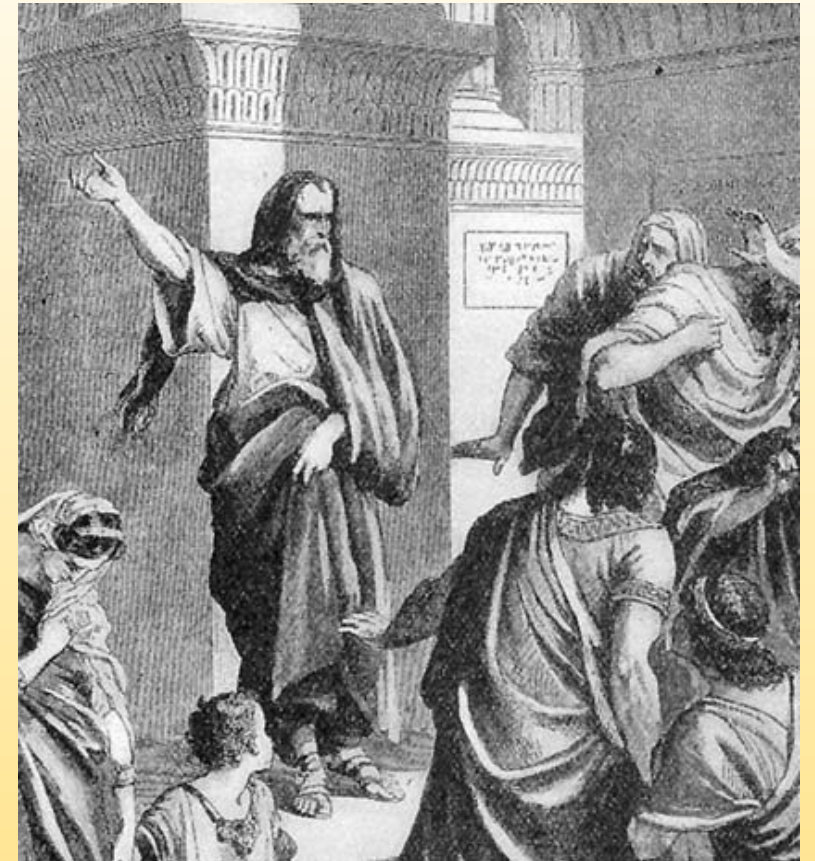
# I. Introduction

Jeremiah is one of the most prominent figures of the Old Testament, whose messages are very close to the heart of our generation. He went through the incredible suffering, but never forgot the message of hope and of God's everlasting love.



“Jeremiah in an author like a brazen wall, and at the same time like soft wax. Brazen, since no power on earth could induce him to alter the tenor of his proclamation; but soft, in that we feel that a man of gentle disposition and broken heart has given utterance to these powerful words.”

Carl Wilhelm Eduard Naegelsbach, New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1886, p. 8.



“ Jeremiah has been known as “the weeping prophet” (cf. 9:1; 13:17; 14:17), living a life of conflict because of his predictions of judgment by the invading Babylonians. He was threatened, tried for his life, put in stocks, forced to flee from Jehoiakim, publicly humiliated by a false prophet, and thrown into a pit. Jeremiah carried out a ministry directed mostly to his own people in Judah, but which expanded to other nations at times.”  
John MacArthur



“Prophets had wept over the apostasy of Israel and the terrible desolations by which their sins were visited. Jeremiah wished that his eyes were a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of his people, for the Lord’s flock that was carried away captive. (Jeremiah 9:1; 13:17.) What, then, was the grief of Him whose prophetic glance took in, not years, but ages! He beheld the destroying angel with sword uplifted against the city which had so long been Jehovah’s dwelling place.”

Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 21.



“The great prophet Jeremiah lived during the most crucial period of Judah's existence as a kingdom. He saw the destruction of Jerusalem and the holy Temple, after he had incessantly warned his people to mend their ways before it was too late. And when the catastrophe finally overwhelmed his people, he was the one who bitterly lamented Israel's terrible fate in the Book of Ezechiel (Lamentations) which we read on Tisha B'Av, the anniversary of that catastrophe. At the same time, he proved to be a true friend in need, by helping his stricken people to bear the blow with courage and dignity, and by pointing out to them the path that would lead to restoration and redemption.”  
Nissan Mindel

“A true prophet must love his people. Even when the harshest reproach is called for, the prophet must consider himself a divine emissary whose role is to help redeem the people, not to stand aloof and condemn. Indeed, journalists today take on the role of moral and social critics, though more often than not their criticism is laced with the venom of loathing. Criticism based on love, of the kind that distinguished Jeremiah, is not often found.”  
Binyamin Lau, Jeremiah:  
The Fate of a Prophet”





“The Prophet Jeremiah reveals the need for a new covenant and explains the difference between the law and the New Covenant. This is a new covenant and not a revision or renewal of the law. Under the New Covenant, God places the law in the people’s hearts. While this act causes God to forgive iniquity, more significant, is that the LORD no longer remembers sin!”

John McTernan



“Jeremiah is commonly known as the “weeping prophet,” based on his wish to have a “fountain of tears” with which he might weep for the slain of his own people... But within the huge collection of prophetic oracles that make up the fifty-two chapters of Jeremiah's witness, one finds more than tears, more than frank admissions of pain, and more than convictions about the evils of Judah. One also finds startling promises of hope, hope found not merely in the possibility of human repentance, but grounded squarely in the amazing grace of God.”

John C. Holbert



# II. Context



The first chapter of the Prophet Jeremiah book is relating the story of his call to serve as prophet. This is the last opportunity that God gives to Jerusalem. In this chapter there is already the warning: if Jerusalem is not listening, an enemy from the North (Babylon) will come and destroy the city.



# The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah: Structure

A	Ch. 1	Prologue: Vocation of Jeremiah and prediction about Babylon
B	Ch. 2 - 10	Prophecies regarding Judah
C	Ch. 11 - 20	Confessions of Jeremiah
D	Ch. 21 - 29	Nebuchadnezzar punishing the king Zedekiah and Jerusalem
E	Ch. 30 - 33	The New Covenant and the new Consolation
D'	Ch. 34 - 35	Sin of the king Zedekiah
C'	Ch. 36 - 45	Suffering of Jeremiah
B'	Ch. 46 - 51	Prophecies regarding the Nations
A	Ch. 52	Epilogue: Fall of Jerusalem and fulfillment of the prophecy about Babylon

III. God's  
foreknowledge  
creates the right  
dynamics for the  
fulfillment of His  
plans



# 1. The Pathways of God's Children are well prepared in advance

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you."



“This is one of the two great labyrinths into which human minds are drawn: the question of free will versus predestination.”  
Neal Stephenson,  
*Quicksilver*



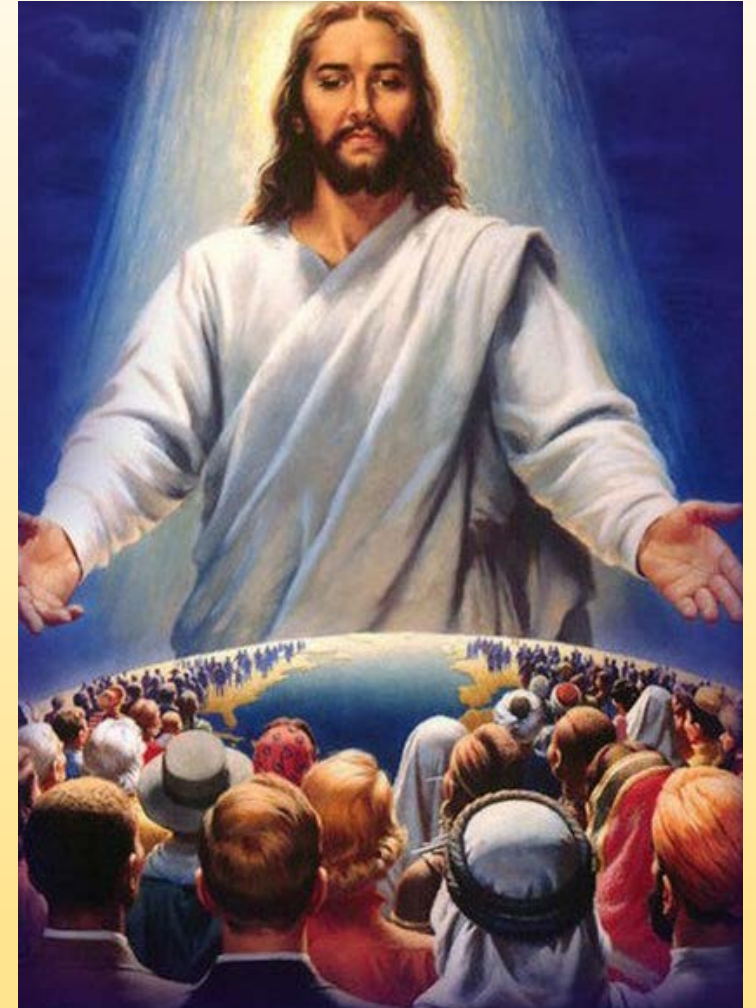


“Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Whoever means whoever. Not just some, not just the elect; that means that anyone who wants to come to God and repent may do so. There is not a certain group that is predestined for hell and they can't do anything about it. How then would God be just?”

Lisa Bedrick, *On Calvinism*



“God predestines people to salvation and not to damnation. (Matthew 25: 34. 41.) His desire is that no one “should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3: 9.). However, in addition for his predestination for salvation, He selects those who He want to fulfill His projects. This is the predestination for a mission. At the same time, He rejects others for the same task (Malachi 1: 2. 3.), knowing what is the best for the success of His plan of salvation.”  
(DS)



2. God knows how to  
select the right people  
“Before you were born I sanctified  
you”



The Hebrew verb for 'I sanctified you', KADASH, means to consecrate, to sanctify, to prepare, to dedicate, to be hallowed, to be holy, to be sanctified, to be separated, to regard or treat as sacred. Obviously, there is a process by which God's children are selected and made in God's image ("Be holy as I am holy"). This sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit who is transforming our hearts in order to qualify us for His service.



“The primary meaning is, “to set apart” from a common to a special use; hence arose the secondary sense, “to sanctify,” ceremonially and morally.”

Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset,  
David Brown, A commentary,  
critical, experimental and practical  
on the Old and New Testaments



“The word came to Jeremiah by means of inspiration, and is neither the product of a reflective musing as to what his calling was to be, nor the outcome of an irresistible revelation vouchsafed to him, which raised his spiritual to a state of ecstasy, so that he both recognised the voice of God and felt his lips touched by the hand of God.”  
Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 8, p. 26.



3. God qualifies those who are selected to accomplish His will  
“I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”



“It’s easy to accept our charge to do the ministry of Jesus without really thinking about what we’re doing... “We’re to do the ministry of Jesus. Great!” But when we stop and think about it, we have accepted an astounding and overwhelming mission, one that is seemingly impossible. Doing the ministry of Jesus is a bit like climbing Mt. Everest. Perhaps most difficult of all is the lack of oxygen near the summit of the mountain’s 29,028 feet. This region is called “the Death Zone” because of the harrowing conditions, especially the dearth of oxygen. In a sense, the wind of the Spirit is like the bottled oxygen that enables climbers to reach the top of Mt. Everest. And you have an unlimited supply of God’s oxygen!”

Dr. Mark D. Roberts



“God chooses to involve people in his plan. His intention to bring blessing is not separate from human obedience in being the agent of blessing. This blessing is not only spiritual in nature, but includes all the good things that God provides for his people in this world.”

Christopher Wright



“Jacob was a cheater, Peter had a temper, David had an affair, Noah got drunk, Jonah ran from God, Paul was a murderer, Gideon was insecure, Miriam was a gossip, Martha was a worrier, Thomas was a doubter, Sara was impatient, Elijah was moody, Moses stuttered, Abraham was old,... and Lazarus was dead. God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the CALLED!”  
No matter where you are in your life with God, HE is qualifying you for his service because you are CALLED. He can help you overcome the mistakes you have made, and even use them to help others. Just allow *Him* to use you.”  
Colton Jensen

# V. Conclusion



“In the youthful Jeremiah, God saw one who would be true to his trust and who would stand for the right against great opposition. “Say not, I am a child,” the Lord bade His chosen messenger. For forty years Jeremiah was to stand before the nation as a witness for truth and righteousness. In a time of unparalleled apostasy he was to exemplify in life and character the worship of the only true God. During the terrible sieges of Jerusalem he was to be the mouthpiece of Jehovah. He was to predict the downfall of the house of David and the destruction of the beautiful temple built by Solomon. And when imprisoned because of his fearless utterances, he was still to speak plainly against sin in high places. Despised, hated, rejected of men, he was finally to witness the literal fulfillment of his own prophecies of impending doom, and share in the sorrow and woe that should follow the destruction of the fated city.

Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 408.

“Every minister worthy of the name has to walk the line between prophetic vision and spiritual sustenance, between telling people the comforting things they want to hear and challenging them with the difficult things they need to hear.”

Timothy B. Tyson



“In all ages God’s appointed witnesses have exposed themselves to reproach and persecution for the truth’s sake. Joseph was maligned and persecuted because he preserved his virtue and integrity. David, the chosen messenger of God, was hunted like a beast of prey by his enemies. Daniel was cast into a den of lions because he was true to his allegiance to heaven. Job was deprived of his worldly possessions; Jeremiah could not be deterred from speaking the words that God had given him to speak; and his testimony so enraged the king and princes that he was cast into a loathsome pit. Stephen was stoned, Paul was imprisoned, and John was banished to the Isle of Patmos “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” These examples of human steadfastness bear witness to the faithfulness of God’s promises—of His abiding presence and sustaining grace. They testify to the power of faith to withstand the powers of the world.” Ellen G. White, *Acts of Apostles*, p. 575.

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