

Jeremiah 1:

"THE REBEL PROPHET" (JEREMIAH)

I. THE TIMES

A. Historical Conditions:

1. Manasseh, the king of Judah, was very evil.
2. Assyrian practices and customs were allowed in Judah.
3. Josiah followed Manasseh as king and was a good man who tried to bring Judah back to God.
4. The lost and forgotten Book of Law was found and read to all Judah.
5. Jehoiakim followed Josiah as king and undid all Josiah tried to do.
6. Nebuchadrezzar captured Jerusalem and took the people to Babylon.
7. Daniel and Ezekiel were among those taken to Babylon.
8. Jerusalem was finally burnt and leveled.

B. Social Conditions:

1. The rich were very powerful.
2. The poor had to become slaves in order to just survive.
3. A selfish want for material things characterized Judah.

C. Religious Conditions:

1. Judah's religion was a mixture of nature, animal, and Hebrew religions.
2. It was impossible for Jeremiah to lift Judah out of its religious mire.

II. THE MAN

A. His Early Training:

1. He lived in Anathoth, a village of priests and prophets.
2. He learned God's word from the company of God's prophets in the village.
3. It is very possible that Jeremiah and Josiah were boy-hood friends.

B. His Call:

1. He felt God had called him from his birth.
2. He knew God had deliberately called him.
3. God assured him that He was in control and knew what was going on.

C. His Character:

1. Jeremiah was shy, timid, sensitive, emotional and of tender nature.
2. He was born in the upper class and had money and a good education.

3. He was a rebel and often laughed at Judah's pretense of worship.
4. He blasted kings, princes, false prophets, and priests with his sharp tongue.
5. God had to continually wrestle with him to make him strong.

III. THE BOOK

A. The Outline:

- 1 - Jeremiah's call.
- 2 - 35 - Prophecies concerning Jerusalem and Judah.
- 36- 45 - Biographical narratives.
- 46- 51 - Prophecies concerning foreign nations.
- 52 - A final word concerning Zedekiah.

B. Teaching Values:

1. Jeremiah's hard task - 1:5-10
2. The honeymoon is over - 2:2-7
3. Judah left God for idols - 2:11-13
4. Judah is a clay pot - 18:3-6
5. God could still be found - 29:13

LESSONS OF VALUE

1. Even a young, shy boy can be prepared by the touch of God to become a mighty messenger to sinful men.
2. God's tender heart is severely hurt by the sight of His children who have forgotten their honeymoon vows.
3. Formal repetition of pious phrases and offering costly sacrifices are an insult to God.
4. God never calls one to run with the horses until He has trained them with the footmen.
5. Sin is a thing of the heart and must be dealt with by God.
6. Genuine repentance must precede God's giving blessings.
7. True worship is an inward, spiritual, and genuine response of the heart to God.
8. Each person stands alone before the righteous God and will be judged as an individual soul.