

# An Overview of Jeremiah

June 17, 1990, April 1991

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The book alternates between sections with considerable narrative content (largely biographical) and sections that are almost all poetic oracles.

1. Biographical, 1. Jeremiah's call. 1:4-10

Lesson: God chooses, equips, and calls us to serve him.

2. Oracles, 2-25. Judgment on Judah.

Lesson: God will punish those who sin against him.

a) The first four sections (chh. 2-13) incrementally build up a fourfold picture of sin, judgment, mourning, and restoration.

1) 2 the *rib* (formal complaint): Judah has sinned. 2:9-13

2) 3-6 the example of Israel: sin brings judgment. 5:10-18

3) 7-10 the temple sermon: Sin, Judgment, Mourning. 8:18-9:1

4) 11-13 Scrapbook: sin, judgment, mourning, restoration. (But there is a hint of restoration as early as 4:27; 5:10,18). 12:14-17

b) The next three sections (14-24) show that the opportunity for response is limited.

1) 14-17, Covenant Judgments (cf. Lev. 26): the *kind* of response needed is true repentance, not superficial prayer. 14:10-12; 17:24-27

2) 18-20, the Potter: the *time* of repentance must be now, not later. 18:1-6; 19:1,10-11

3) 21-24, Zedekiah's question: shows that the nation's response was the wrong kind at the wrong time. 21:1-7

c) 25, Judgment and Revenge: a capstone of the entire judgment section. 25:28-33

3. Biographical, 26-29. Jeremiah's relations with the Priests and Prophets. 26:1-9

Lesson: Organized religion is an enemy of God's people.

4. Oracles and Biography, 30-33. Promise of Restoration; New Covenant. 31:31-40

Lesson: God will restore Israel under a new covenant.

5. Biographical, 34-45. Jeremiah's relations with Kings. 39:15-18

Lesson: Even in judgment, God protects his remnant.

- a) 34:1-7, A Promise to Zedekiah
- b) 34:8-39:14, Through the Fall of Jerusalem (Jehoiakim and Zedekiah)
- c) 39:15-18, A Promise to Ebedmelech
- d) 40-44, After the Fall of Jerusalem (Nebuchadnezzar)
- e) 45, A Promise to Baruch

6. Oracles, 46-51. Oracles against the Nations.

Lesson: God will judge all nations, not just Israel.

This section expands ch. 25, with which the first set of judgment oracles ended.

- a) ch. 46, Egypt (restoration, 26b)
- b) ch. 47, Philistines
- c) ch. 48, Moab (restoration, 47)
- d) 49:1-6, Sons of Ammon (restoration, 6)
- e) 49:7-22, Edom
- f) 49:23-27, Damascus
- g) 49:28-33, Qedar and Hazor
- h) 49:34-39, Elam (restoration, 39)
- i) ch. 50-51, Babylon

7. Historical Epilog: 52 = 2 Kings 24:18-25:30. According to 51:64, this is not part of the main body of the book.