

## The Night is Darkest before the Dawn – The Book of Jeremiah

Have you ever been right about something that you wish you never were?

Jeremiah was the prophet who both prophesized that Jerusalem would fall, and the prophet who lived to see that day come to pass!

Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet, b/c his heart broke over what he knew was coming for God's people if they didn't "repent!" - **Jeremiah 4:19**

He pleaded with them, in so many ways, to turn from their sin but their hearts were hardened, & they became like dirty underwear! - **Jeremiah 13:1-11**

What do we do with stained undergarments? We throw them away! So too will God do this to His people if they don't repent! This was Jeremiah's message

This prophecy was realized when Jerusalem fell in 586B.C. - **Jeremiah 39:1-10**

All that Israel thought they were, their whole identity, was wrapped up in:

- The Land promised to Abraham
- The Law given to Moses
- The Lineage of Kings established through David

It all went up in flames as the Temple burned to the ground, as their land was taken from them, & as their king & their people were exiled to Babylon!

This was truly an identity crisis for them! They wrestled with questions like:

- Who are we without this land?
- Who are we if we are no longer under the law of God, but of man?
- Who are we if we are exiles in a foreign land under a foreign king?

What if we were in their shoes?

- What if we saw our church go up in flames?
- What if our freedom of religion was stripped away from us?
- What if we were taken from our homes & imprisoned?

Would we question God? His goodness? His plan? Our place in it?

Would we throw in the towel? Would we walk away from God? What if?

This picture of Jeremiah the prophet, as well as the book that bears his name, is not what we often see depicted on bookmarks, wall art, & bumper stickers! We often see only the glamorized view in cliché snippets!

What often comes to mind when you hear the name/book of Jeremiah?

Many of our most beloved verses in Scripture are found in this book!

- **Jeremiah 1:5** - "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, & before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

BUT what about **Jeremiah 1:10**?

- **Jeremiah 17:7** - "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water..."

BUT what about **Jeremiah 17:9**?

- **Jeremiah 18:6** - "Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel."

BUT what about **Jeremiah 18:11**?

- **Jeremiah 29:11** - "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not evil, to give you a future and a hope."

BUT what about **Jeremiah 29:10**?

- **Jeremiah 31:3** - "I have loved you with an everlasting love..."

BUT what about **Jeremiah 31:2**?

- **Jeremiah 33:3** - "Call to me and I will answer you, and tell you great and hidden things that you have not known."

BUT what about **Jeremiah 33:1**?

God has good plans for His people, and He will be faithful to carry them out.

However, God's ultimate plan for His people was not just to bring them back after 70 years in exile to Jerusalem! He had an even bigger & better plan!

**Jeremiah 23:5-6** - The Righteous Branch

**Jeremiah 31:31-34** - The New Covenant

After 70 yrs, God's people did return to Jerusalem thus fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy. But as we can see, there is an even greater fulfillment to come in the arrival of Jesus Christ (500 years later)!

The prophet Daniel also points to this in Daniel 9:24-27. After a period of 70's the true fulfillment of God's covenant promise will be realized!

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