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God's Good News Story

Jeremiah:

The Master Potter Has Great Plans For Your Life

God's Good News Story continues today with our key character – Jeremiah. Jeremiah was the son of a priest named Hilkiyah from a small town in Judah called **Anathoth**. It is about 3 miles northeast of Jerusalem.



Jeremiah served during the reigns of seven (7) kings/rulers. Beginning around 630BC and for the next 40 or so years (@580bc) and had a roller coaster relationship with these kings/rulers, a real love/hate relationship, unfortunately for Jeremiah he was hated more than loved by these kings. He was faithful and bold to confront these kings and the people of Judah with their brazen sin and he often paid a high price for his faithfulness to God. In the Books of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles we find much of the interaction with these kings in an historical setting. However, we know him best from the book that bears his name, Jeremiah. Interestingly, this book is the longest book in the Bible, based on the Hebrew word count. It is about 3% larger than Genesis and 10% larger than Psalms.

Scholars also rank his writing style and poetic skills as some of the best in the Bible. Another trivia point is that more is recorded about the life and ministry of Jeremiah than any of the other numerous prophets.

Even though Isaiah is quoted more and contains more “Messianic” prophecies, Jeremiah and his revealing to us of the “New Covenant” in Jeremiah 31 ties us to the Messianic prophecy and the “**Scarlet Thread of Redemption**”.

Below is a book overview chart by Charles Swindoll.

JEREMIAH				
	Judah's Sin and Judgment		Prophecies against the Nations	A Sobering Ending
	Jeremiah's call	Exhortations to Judah	Egypt Philistia Moab Ammon Edom	Jerusalem in ruins
	Idolatry	Promises of restoration (30-33)	Damascus Kedar and Hazor Elam Babylon	
	Corrupt leadership	Fall of Jerusalem and aftermath (39-45)		
	Moral compromise			
	CHAPTERS 1-45		CHAPTERS 46-51	CHAPTER 52
Theme	Judgment is coming; repent!			
Key Verses	7:23-24; 8:11-12, 21; 9:23-24; 31:1-40			
Christ in Jeremiah	The fountain of living waters (2:13); the righteous Branch, the coming Shepherd, the Lord our righteousness (23:4-6); the New Covenant (31:31); Redeemer (50:34)			

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<https://insightforliving.swncdn.com/pdf/bible-charts/Jeremiah-Bible-chart.pdf>

Jeremiah, like Isaiah and other Prophets received various “visions” or callings from God. He was called by God during the latter days of the reign of the reasonably good King Josiah. He was a young man, some say around 20 when he received God's call. Listen to **Jeremiah 1:1-9**

Jeremiah 1:1-9... ¹ *The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin.* ² *The word of the LORD came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah,* ³ *and through the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, down to the fifth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah king of Judah, when the people of Jerusalem went into exile.* ⁴ *The word of the LORD came to me, saying,* ⁵ *“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”* ⁶ *“Alas, Sovereign LORD,” I said, “I do not know how to speak; I am too young.”* ⁷ *But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you.* ⁸ *Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the LORD.* ⁹ *Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “I have put my words in your mouth”.*

Jeremiah was called at a young age to great task. Like Jeremiah, we too are called to tell people what God has said, ...about love, forgiveness, sin, judgment, and hope. The key point is to obey God and speak the truth no matter how hard it is, how unpopular or how old or young you may be.

Jeremiah was called not only to Speak God’s Truth, but to call people to return to Him and follow the “Ancient Path”. Listen to this passage

Jeremiah 6:16-19... ¹⁶ *This is what the LORD says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, ‘We will not walk in it.’* ¹⁷ *I appointed watchmen over you and said, ‘Listen to the sound of the trumpet!’ But you said, ‘We will not listen.’* ¹⁸ *Therefore hear, you nations; you who are witnesses, observe what will happen to them.* ¹⁹ *Hear, you earth: I am bringing disaster on this people, the fruit of their schemes, because they have not listened to my words and have rejected my law.*

We all come to “crossroads” in our lives where we must choose where we will go, on what side we will stand. Martin Luther King, Jr. is quoted as saying ...*On some positions, cowardice asks the question, is it expedient? And then expedience comes along and asks the question, is it politic? Vanity asks the question, is it popular? Conscience asks the question, is it right? There comes a time when one must take the position that is neither safe nor politic nor popular, but he must do it because conscience tells him it is right.*”

I would like to suggest a slight change to change from ‘conscience’ to what the ‘Ancient Word of God’ tells you is right. Jeremiah made his choice to follow the truth of God. He faithfully and bravely stood before the people, unpopular and unsafe as it was, and called the people to return to the Ancient Way of God’s Truth. I want to add, we need to seek new and modern ways to share the Ancient Gospel message, but the Ancient Truth of God never changes!

Are you willing to stand up for truth and call America back to God's ways!

Jeremiah, like Isaiah and many other prophets, received "a word from the Lord" a vision, a prophetic message. Let's focus on two of these "words" ... The first passage or 'word' reminds me of the first sermon I ever preached back in 1977 at Tangipahoa Baptist Church in Summit, MS. It was on this same passage from Jeremiah 18. Forty-six years later, I am still preaching the same message. God is in control, let Him have His way in your life...

Jeremiah 18:1-11... *This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² "Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you My message." ³ So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. ⁴ But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. ⁵ Then the word of the LORD came to me. ⁶ He said, "Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?" declares the LORD. "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel. ⁷ If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, ⁸ and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. ⁹ And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, ¹⁰ and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it. ¹¹ "Now therefore say to the people of Judah and those living in*

Jerusalem, 'This is what the LORD says: Look! I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you. So turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions.'

There is so much from this passage as well as the life and teaching of Jeremiah, but the 'ancient message' is...

1. We are to tell "God's message" not our personal opinion. His words are life, ours are not.
2. God is the Master Potter, He created us and has the right to shape us anyway He sees fit.
3. He desires to form us to accomplish His will and purpose. Let Him! Don't fight Him.
4. If we let Him shape us He will do great things with us. If we fight Him or disobey, we WILL suffer the consequences.
5. Bottom line...turn from your sins and reform your ways.

God wants to do great things with our lives listen to this verse...

Jeremiah 33:3... *Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*

We must trust in His perfect plan and purpose for our lives, even when it seems things are not going well for us. Listen to these verses in the 2nd passage or 'word' from God to Jeremiah... **Jeremiah 29:10-13**

Jeremiah 29:10–13... ¹⁰ *This is what the LORD says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call on Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.”*

God did exactly what He said He would in the time of Jeremiah. The people of Israel did NOT follow the Ancient Path and were taken away into exile for 70 years (just as Jeremiah had previously prophesied). But after that time God brought His people back and restored the fortunes of Israel. He gave them the promise of a coming Messiah, ‘a righteous branch of David’ who would usher in a New Covenant. A covenant that would be in their hearts. Jesus Christ is that ‘Righteous Branch’ Who by His perfect life, sacrificial death and glorious resurrection provided a New Covenant way to come into right relationship with God. His death provided the ‘**Scarlet Thread of Redemption**’ by which we can be saved and restored.

“Practical Application: The Prophet Jeremiah had a most difficult message to deliver. Jeremiah loved Judah, but he loved God much more. As painful as it was for Jeremiah to deliver a consistent message of judgment to his own people, Jeremiah was obedient to what God told him to do and say. Jeremiah hoped and prayed for mercy from God for Judah, but also trusted that God was good, just, and righteous. We too must obey God, even when it is difficult, recognize God’s will as more important than our own desires, and trust that God, in His infinite wisdom and perfect plan, will bring about the best for His children.” (Romans 8:28).

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Book-of-Jeremiah.html>

Key Take Aways:

- 1. It takes courage to tell the truth and often times you will be hated for it. No matter whether your young or old...Speak the truth anyway!**
- 2. God expects and demands obedience. If we obey, His blessings will be manifold. If we disobey, the results will be disastrous. We are clay in His hands, let Him form you into His chosen vessel.**
- 3. God has made a way for us to come back into right relationship with Him. It is through Jesus Christ who brings a New Covenant.** (Chapter 31 of Jeremiah)

Video Conclusion <https://www.sermoncentral.com/church-media-preaching-sermons/sermon-video-illustrations/the-potter-s-house-11380-detail>
The Potter’s House by James Grocho

God has great plans for you. Will you allow God, the Master Potter to shape you into what He wants? The choice is yours...choose wisely, there are consequences to your decisions.