

**Jeremiah 1:1-3**  
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**A. The Man**

The book of Jeremiah gives us more information about him than we have about any other prophet. We will build up most of this as we go, but for starters, it's interesting to note his ancestry.

1. His ancestry

- a) Anathoth: Where Solomon banished Abiathar the priest after he tried to help Adonijah become David's successor, 1 Kings 2:26-27. Replaced by Zadok the priest. Cf. 1 Sam. 2:35-36.
- b) Hilkiyah: tempting to identify with the high priest who found the book of the law in the temple under Josiah, 2 Kings 22:8, but then Jeremiah would probably have come from Jerusalem, not Anathoth. Wrong family.

2. The Piety of a Rejected Priesthood: here; compare also Korah (judged in Num. 16; 26:9-11; their descendants were temple musicians, for whom many of the Pss were written: 42-49; 84-88 Note in particular 42, 84.) They have felt the judgment of the Lord first-hand, and so know that God does business for keeps.

**LESSON:** "Whom the Lord loves, he chastens..." God is able to turn his judgment into blessing. In fact, isn't this all of us, descendants of Adam? The joy of God's salvation belongs not to those who never sin, but to those who know their sin and repent of it.

3. Called the Weeping Prophet, for the depth of his emotion over the sins of Judah. Cf. Lamentations, also traditionally by him.
4. When the end drew near, advocated submission to Neb. rather than continued resistance, because he saw that the Lord had purposed to bind the people.

**B. The Kings**

Covers the reigns of the last five kings of Judah before the Babylonian captivity. Only three are named in vv.2,3. The fourth, Jehoahaz, is between Josiah and Jehoiakim, and the fifth, Jehoiachin, is between Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. Each of these unmentioned kings reigns for only 3 months.

1. General overview of the Israelite monarchy

- a) Saul, 1043-1011
- b) David, 1011-971
- c) Solomon, 971-931
- d) Divided Kingdom
  - 1) North: 18 kings (+/-), nine different families, until the Assyrians took them captive in 722.

- 2) South: all of David's family.
  - a> Up to 722, 12 kings.
  - b> Then 8 more take us through to the end; Jeremiah covers the last 5 of these eight.

2. Detailed overview of the last eight.

- a) The 13th, Hezekiah, was king when Sennacherib invades Judah in 701. He trusts in the Lord, and the nation is delivered. A righteous king.
- b) Manasseh, 55 years. 2 Chr 33. Was taken captive, repented, and returned to Jerusalem, vv.11-17, but in spite of his conversion, the damage was done.
- c) Amon, 2 years, wicked.
- d) Josiah, 31 years. Took throne at age of 8. 2 Chr. 34:
  - 1) year 8, v.3, began to seek the God of David.
  - 2) year 12, v.3, began to purge out the idols.
  - 3) year 13, Jeremiah began his ministry.
  - 4) year 18, v.8, began to repair the temple, and discovered the book of the law. (But note that the prophet of favor at this time is a woman, 21,22.) 35:19, kept the passover.
  - 5) Died attempting to keep Pharaoh Necho from marching through Judah.
- e) People set Jehoahaz up, 2 Chr. 36, but Necho replaces him with his brother Eliakim, whom he renames Jehoiakim, for 11 years.
- f) Nebuchadnezzar takes him captive, 36:7. His son Jehoiachin takes his place, v.9 (NB: only eight years old, but still can do evil in the sight of the Lord.)
- g) Neb. then replaces him with Zechariah, another son of Josiah, who rebels against Babylon, leading to the final fall of the city.
- h) From Josiah on, Judah is a pawn being crushed between Egypt and Babylon. The motive for the judgment is the sin of the people under Manasseh: 2 Chr. 34:23; 2 Kings 23:26ff.

**LESSON:** Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap. In spite of Manasseh's repentance, the damage done by his sin in the lives of the people could not be reversed, and led eventually to destruction. We cannot sin and then repent with impunity. God forgives, but the scars often remain.

C. **Structural Overview**

- 1. Bullock's Divisions. The book alternates between sections with considerable narrative content (largely biographical) and sections that are almost all oracles.
  - a) Biographical, 1:1-19. Jeremiah's call.
  - b) Oracles, 2:1-25:13. Judgment on Judah.
  - c) Biographical, 26:1-29:32. Jeremiah's relations with the **Priests**.
  - d) Oracles, 30:1-31:40. Promise of Restoration; New Covenant.
  - e) Biographical, 32:1-45:5. Jeremiah's relations with the **King**.
  - f) Oracles, 46:1-51:64. Oracles against the Nations.
  - g) Historical Epilog: 52:1-34. = 2 Kings 24:18-25:30. Note that

according to 51:64, this is not part of the main body of the book.

- h) **LESSON:** Jeremiah's commission from God (ch.1) gives him authority with both the religious (26-29) and the secular (32-45) leaders of the nation, and equips him to speak of judgment and blessing, both among God's people and among the heathen. We also have an unction from the Holy One. Are we as diligent in our ministry?

2. Dates in terms of some "year of" some king: With few exceptions, these are all in the narrative portions of the book.

	"year of"	"reign of"	"his reign"	Poetic
a) 1:2,3	x		x	
b) 25:1,3	x			x
c) 26:1		x		
d) 27:1		x		
e) 28:1		x		
f) 32:1	x			
g) 36:1,9	x			
h) 39:1,2	x			
i) 45:1	x			
j) 46:2	x			x
k) 49:34		x		x
l) 51:59	x		x	x
m) 52:4,5,12, 29,30,31	x		x	

#### D. Potential Lessons

1. From his ancestry: the joy of those who know the forgiveness of sin.
2. From the kings: The harvest law: the effects of Manasseh's sin, in spite of Josiah's righteousness.
3. From the structure: The breadth and authority of the messenger of God.