

Jeremiah 1:1-19

Introduction: We like to look back on history and emphasize the significant accomplishments and goals accomplished. The history of the U.S. is an interesting one of many accomplishments. Our country has moved from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy and presently are a technological economy. We have seen accomplishments such as the change in transportation from the horse and buggy to the automobile to the train to the airplane. This has revolutionized our society in so many ways. We have become very mobile and our perspective has broadened significantly. We have seen the development of the telegraph to the land line phone to the cell phone that has revolutionized our ability to communicate. We have seen a transformation of our culture from a Bible based mentality to a secular based mentality with the removal of the things of God that has been well documented by others and this preacher.

What we seldom recognize is how this has affected the church and its involvement in the culture.

“**heart**” – 65 times. Key verse: **Jer 4:4 (KJV)** Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench *it*, because of the evil of your doings.

“For a people to boast in the glory of the past, and to deny the secret that made the past, is to perish.”

—G. Campbell Morgan (Studies in the Prophecy of Jeremiah, page 19).

Jeremiah was a priest since his father, Hilkiah, was a priest (**vs. 1**). G. Campbell Morgan suggests that Jeremiah’s father was the one who found the book of the Law of Moses in the Temple and brought it to Josiah the King (**2Kings 22:8**).

Warren Wiersbe made the following comment about the contrast between the ministry of prophet and priest. He said, “The ministry of a prophet, however, was quite another matter, because you never knew from one day to the next what the Lord would call you to say or do. The priest worked primarily to conserve the past by protecting and maintaining the sanctuary ministry, but the prophet labored to change the present so the nation would have a future. When the prophet saw the people going in the wrong direction, he sought to call them back to the right path. (Bible Exposition Commentary (BE Series) - Old Testament - The Bible Exposition Commentary – The Prophets.)”

Outline of Jeremiah 1

When God Commissions a Prophet we seldom consider the things that go on between God and His chosen vessel for the delivering of a message. Some are like Jonah, who fled from the responsibility. There are some like old

prophet found in 1Kings 13 who was given specific instructions from God and a man who lied to him told the old prophet that God had told him something else and the old prophet died because of his lack of following God's direct instructions. Some are like Amos who did the job but did not consider himself a prophet nor the son of a prophet. God usually calls a man (or woman) who will get the job done and be willing to follow through with God's instructions even though they may bring difficult circumstances.

Jeremiah is not different. He is often called the "weeping prophet" and that is because of the book of Lamentations. **Lam 3:46-51 (KJV)** ⁴⁶All our enemies have opened their mouths against us. ⁴⁷Fear and a snare is come upon us, desolation and destruction. ⁴⁸Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. ⁴⁹Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission, ⁵⁰Till the LORD look down, and behold from heaven. ⁵¹Mine eye affecteth mine heart because of all the daughters of my city.

1. **The Call of Jeremiah, Jer. 1:1-6.** This was a moving experience for Jeremiah. Some suggest that he was only about 19 years of age. We note here that he was the son of Hilkiah the priest. When you read 2Kings 22-23 and 2Chronicles 34-35 you find that the condition of the country was in terrible condition spiritually and socially. We read in **Jeremiah 1:2** that this was during the reign of Josiah. **Jeremiah 1:3** tells us there were two other kings reigning during Jeremiah's prophecy and one was the son of Josiah and the other the grandson of Josiah. The condition of the land was not good. If you read the account of **2Kings** the emphasis of Josiah's reign was where he cleansed the land and initiated the repair of the "house of God" in Jerusalem. There was a great revival under Josiah who "**did that which was right in the sight of the LORD**" (**2Kings 22:2**). He began his reign when he was eight years old. When you read the account of his reign in **2Kings 22-24** the emphasis is on what he did culturally to change the land. Here are some of the things he did:
 - a. **He put down the idolatrous priests, 2Kings 23:5.** These priests had burned incense in the "high places" (which is usually a place of worship) and to Baal, the sun, the moon, the planets, and the hosts of heaven.
 - b. **He brake down the houses of the socomites, 2Kings 23:7.** These houses were "by the house of the Lord" or the Temple.
 - c. **He removed the priests of the cities of Judah and prohibited them from coming to the altar in the Temple, 2Kings 23:8-9.**
 - d. **He took away the horses that the kings of Judah "had given to the sun" which were evidently kept at the gate of the Temple ("the house of the Lord") and burned the "chariots of the sun" with fire, 2Kings 23:11.**
 - e. **He removed all the high places which Solomon had built** which were to the pagan gods such as "Ashtoroth...Chemosh...Milcom" the

“abomination” of the people surrounding the nation of Israel such as the Zidonians, Moabites and Ammonites, 2Kings 23:12-13.

- f. **He removed the altar in Bethel which Jeroboam had built to keep the people of the north from going to Jerusalem to worship, 2Kings 23:15-16.**

What is significant about the reign of Josiah as you read the two accounts of his reign in 2Kings 22-24 and 2Chronicles 34-35 is that the 2Kings account records the cleansing of the land by removing all that defiled and led the people away from the worship of the God of the Bible. The 2Chronicles account gives record of the revival that took place as the Temple was cleansed of the idols, the idolatrous priests removed, the Law reinstated, and the Passover observed.

2. **The Comfort of the Lord to Jeremiah, Jer. 1:7-10.** God gives Jeremiah assurance of His plan for the prophet goes back much farther than his 19th birthday. God gives assurance to Jeremiah that His plan for the prophet began early in his life, even before he was still in the womb. Note that God did something special for Jeremiah in **Jer 1:5 (KJV) Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.** Do not overlook that last phrase in this verse. God had not just called Jeremiah to preach to the people of Israel, the Jew, but to the “nations.” His responsibility went far beyond the people among whom he lived. Have we forgotten the command given by our Lord in **Mt 28:19-20 (KJV) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.** Amen. You see we have a responsibility similar to the Prophet Jeremiah. What are you doing about this responsibility?
3. **The Coming of the Word of the Lord, Jer. 1:11-13.** There is an interesting nature of the book of Jeremiah. We find the phrase “**word of the Lord**” – 52 times in the book. **Key verse: Jeremiah 8:9 (KJV) The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?** One of the reasons Jeremiah’s job is so difficult is that the people had “**rejected the word of the LORD.**” We should not be so naïve to understand that the same phenomenon has occurred in our nation today. There has been a wholesale departure from the “true” word of God that the culture has been given more authority than the word of God. We find this in the some of the cultural movements that changed the U.S.
 1. Roe vs. Wade. In 1973 the Supreme Court ruled that abortion was legal and thus initiated the most pernicious killing of babies ever experienced in the world.

2. Sexual Revolution. This is often referred to as the “sexual liberation.” This was a social movement that challenged the traditional views of sexual behavior and opened the floodgates for open sex, homosexual behavior, and any other sexual behavior that had been taboo in the society. Some events that marked this “revolution.”
 - a. The Hippy Movement which sparked the making of a movie that was nothing more than a documentary of by the name of “Woodstock” which demonstrated the Hippy movement’s behavior was the result of filming the Woodstock Festival which took place in 1969. It was held in the Catskill Mountains of New York.
 - b. The introduction of open pornography. Hugh Hefner founded the “Playboy” magazine in 1953 and from this open pornography became acceptable in the U.S.
 - c. The Gay Rights Movement began in 1969 when the “Stonewall Riots of 1969” brought about a mobilization of the homosexual movement.
 - d. The “Women’s Rights” movement or “Feminism.” This was a movement that wanted to “eliminate unfavorable bias towards men” and elevate them to the status equal with men. The major idea of this movement was “free sex” and the promotion of “sexual pleasure.” One of the things that helped this movement was the introduction of the “oral contraceptive” that would prevent pregnancy.

The removal of Prayer and Bible reading in the schools and public places. A woman by the name of Madalyn Murray O’Hair single handedly made the reading of the Bible and prayer in the public discourse a forbidden practice. She established the *American Athiest* movement and published the *American Athiest Magazine*. In 1963 she brought a lawsuit by the title “Murray vs. Curlett” which made its way to the Supreme Court of the U.S. The court ruled that Bible reading in American public schools was prohibited. This came one year after the decision by the same court in a suit titled, *Engel vs. Vitale* in which prayer was prohibited in American public schools. These all signaled a movement away from the biblical norm that had dominated the society and culture of the U.S.

Please note the responsibility of the prophet. Look again at **Jer 1:9-10 (KJV)** ⁹Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. ¹⁰See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant. Jeremiah had a difficult task. He was to be a demolition team and a construction engineer. He was to “root out” and “pull down” and “destroy” and “throw down.” Then he was to “build and plant.” Folks we have a similar responsibility. We should not sit by and watch our world take on the image of the enemy and continue in the vein of idolatry and paganism. What is interesting is what transpires next.

Introduction to Part 2

[Isaiah's call to be a prophet.]

“It would be at best but a thankless task; for people away from GOD, yet proudly ignorant of their condition, do not, as a rule, show much gratitude to the man who seeks to turn the light on and manifest things as they really are. It is, generally speaking, a far more pleasant and agreeable task to preach the gospel to poor lost sinners than to minister to the needs of wayward saints. None but a man who is himself very low before GOD can accomplish it successfully. If I would wash my brother's feet, I must stoop to do it” (Harry Ironside, *Jeremiah*).

People who are away from God are people who usually reject any overture to understand the things of God and the importance of commitment. They often scorn those who attempt to get them to turn to God.

Proverbs 19:29 (KJV) *Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools.* Israel could be classified as both of these classifications, scorners and fools. They scorned the message of God and they were fools because of their idolatry which replaced the living God with something that was dead. When one falls into this attitude they face a God who is not delighted in their lifestyle.

The question is “Why did Israel fail in their commitment to God?” G. Campbell Morgan makes some important observations concerning this matter of why Israel failed. He said, “Her departure from God was due to the fact that she declined to respond to His call to the highest. Wherever you find a people turning back from God, it is not that they are unconscious of His holiness, but that they are conscious of it: not that they are unconvinced of the high ideals of His requirements, but that they are convinced. This principle finds its central focusing in the life of Jesus. When He began to talk to His disciples in mystic language about eating His flesh and drinking His blood, they said, This is a hard saying, and many of them went back, and walked no more with Him. Why did they go back? Because they did not understand Him, and they were not prepared to follow. Why has any nation which has seen the glory of God drawn back? Not because it did not understand, but because it did understand. Not because it failed to apprehend the glory; but because it apprehended His glory, **but was not prepared to pay the price**” (*Studies in the Prophecy of Jeremiah*, page 37). [Emphasis added.]

If a believer today decides to go back from flowing God it is not because they do not understand the dictates of scripture. It is because they willfully decide to go a different way. There are people who decide not to follow the truth of the word of God and choose to live separate from God's influence and input. Note some of the things God said to Israel in this prophecy:

Jeremiah 2:9 (KJV) *Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, and with your children's children will I plead. Jeremiah 4:1 (KJV)* *If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove.* These are things God will say to them even when the judgment comes which we will see in the next section. What will it take to get you to return to the Lord? What will it take to get you to follow the Lord and refuse the things that draw you away from Him?

4. **The Careful Observation, Jer. 1:11-12.** Jeremiah is asked by God two times “[what seest thou?](#)” in **verse 11** and **verse 13**.
- a. **This first time he sees “...a rod of an almond tree.”** Now we are not told what this means in the context. There has to be some speculation but there are some conclusions we can make by comparing scripture with scripture. The first time we encounter the word “almond” is in **Ge 43:11 (KJV)** [And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds.](#) This is where Jacob is instructing his sons to go to Egypt to get food and take a gift with them. We can conclude from this that the almond was a significant item to be included as a gift to Pharaoh. The next place we find the *almond* is in the instructions from God to Moses in building the Tabernacle. The *candlestick* was to have a vessel in which to hold the oil for the lamp to give light. **Exodus 25:33** indicates that the *candlestick* was to have “[...bowls made like unto almonds.](#)” There is an important section of the Bible that gives us an idea of what the significance of the *almond* was. God with me to **Numbers 17:1-13**. This is where Moses was selecting the tribe from which the High Priest would come. Every tribe was instructed to bring a “rod” and the name of the man bringing the rod was to be written on the rod. Aaron brought a rod and his name was inscribed on that rod. God said in **Numbers 17:5 (KJV)** [And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom:](#) and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you. We know that Aaron’s rod budded. Now do not miss **Numbers 17:8 (KJV)** [And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.](#) Something supernatural happened to Aaron’s rod. It not only budded and brought forth buds and blossoms but fruit, almonds. Here was a dead “rod” that suddenly came forth with life and yielding fruit. Do we have a better picture of the resurrection? I do not believe that Jeremiah made this connection but there was an acknowledgment that the *rod of the almond* was part of the revelation given to Jeremiah. God instructs Jeremiah in **Jeremiah 1:12 (KJV)** [Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it.](#) The rod of Aaron budded and bore fruit in one night. God is demonstrating that He would perform a supernatural act just as quickly. It is my conviction that God will do what He is going to do in a rapid fashion. He will not delay the judgment that will come upon His wayward people. We can anticipate the next point by reading **Deuteronomy 28:49 (KJV)** [The LORD shall](#)

bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, **as swift as the eagle flieth**; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand.

- b. The Calling of the families of the North, Jer. 1:14-15.** This can be misunderstood but the idea is that judgment is coming. The kingdoms of the north will (historically) eventually be the Babylonians who will take the people of the land into captivity where the freedoms they once enjoyed are no longer available. They will no longer be able to worship God at the Temple or make the sacrifices that God required. Their willful rebellion led them to the slavery that they never thought would come. The people of the United States have sought to throw off the hindrances of “Biblical thought” and a biblical lifestyle that had dominated our culture for over 200 years. What is interesting the people who do not want to yield to the dictates of the Bible will find themselves being forced to yield to the dictates of Islam in the not too distant future in the U.S. unless some things change. I saw a headline on Saturday (4/18/15) which said, “Whistling Armageddon: Obama’s Pact With Iran.” One of the things that will take place in the future coming Tribulation will be an invasion of Israel by the nations of the north. According to Daniel’s prophecy there is going to be an invasion by an army from the north. **Daniel 11:13-14 (KJV)** ¹³For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. ¹⁴And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. As we see this it will be an invasion by the armies from Meshech, Tubal and Gomer. Most identify these as Russia (Meshech and Tubal) and Germany (Gomer). This is found in **Ezekiel 38**. The purpose of this invasion is to establish the Antichrist and to bring judgment upon Israel although they will be protected during the Tribulation. The armies of the north are sources of judgment upon the people who rejected God. Folks there is something going on here that you and I need to pay attention to. God is going to judge Israel and has judged them for the past 2,000 years. There is a verse in the Bible we should pay attention to. It is **1 Peter 4:17 (KJV)** For the time is come that **judgment must begin at the house of God**: and if it first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? [Emphasis added.] You and I need to know that there is a judgment coming. We should begin to pay attention to passages like **1 Corinthians 11:31-32 (KJV)** ³¹For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. ³²But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. If we would judge ourselves, that is when we read the Bible and we find our lifestyle out of harmony with what God has said we need to make a

course correction. In other words we should be critical of ourselves and not others. We should be willing to judge ourselves. The consequences are that God will if we do not. Israel was not willing to do such a thing as this.

- 5. The Conditions of the People, Jer. 1:16.** This verse gives a clear explanation for the conditions of the land in Jeremiah's day. The people had "forsaken God" and "...burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands." Is there any place in the Bible that better describes the condition of our land today? We have "forsaken God" in every aspect of our society. We have rejected the word of God and will find ourselves being forced to worship at places we never thought possible in the U.S. and that is Islam. We see a day in the U.S. where the people who call themselves Christian will be forced to worship the god of Islam or be put to death. The "anti-Christian" fervor in the U.S. is unmistakable. We have a president that mocks the Christian values. We have a Congress that makes laws that prohibit the practice of Christianity in the public square. The condition of our land is not less than what Jeremiah faced.
- 6. The Command to Jeremiah, Jer. 1:17-19.** Jeremiah had a formidable task ahead of him.
 - a. The responsibility of the Prophet, Jer. 1:17.** Jeremiah had the responsibility to "declare what God commanded him." He was not to be "dismayed." In other words he was not to be disheartened or discouraged. The word has the idea of fear or being frightened. Jeremiah did not have the luxury of being afraid of the people. He could not panic at the opposition. If he did God would "confound" him before the people. Folks when we are intimidated by the people we will look foolish before them. That is the idea behind what God is saying to Jeremiah. We need to be bold is the idea. God is telling Jeremiah to be bold and remember who is sending him and who is giving the instructions.
 - b. The reason for the Prophet, Jer. 1:18.** Jeremiah was going to be a "defenced city" and an "iron pillar" and "brazen walls" against the whole land. That is a daunting task. Jeremiah is one person against a nation that was determined to live apart from the demands and doctrines of the Bible. Are we any different? Have you considered what we read in the New Testament about the church? Look at **1Ti 3:15 (KJV)** *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.* People of Victory Baptist Church, we are to be this in a society that has forsaken the truth and bought into a lifestyle that seeks pleasure and freedom from the responsibility of the scripture and the demands of the "Living God." We need to take up our position.

- c. **The response by the people, Jer. 1:19.** Note the way Jeremiah will be treated by the people in this verse. Yet do not overlook the phrase at the end of this verse, “...for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.”

Conclusion: Read **La 1:1-5 (KJV)** ¹How doth the city sit solitary, *that was* full of people! *how* is she become as a widow! she *that was* great among the nations, *and* princess among the provinces, *how* is she become tributary! ²She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears *are* on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort *her*: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies. ³Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits. ⁴The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she *is* in bitterness. ⁵Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: her children are gone into captivity before the enemy.