

Jeremiah

The Fruitless Prophet

Lesson 2 – Commencing Ministry

Jeremiah 1:1-19

Date: 21 October 2020 - Jer20

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1. Jeremiah's Life (v.1-3)

- a. Son of Hilkiah a priest (about **648**)
- b. Grew up in Anathoth in Benjamin, allotted to the priest (Jos 21:18).
- c. Anathoth was located approximately 3 miles (5 km) from Jerusalem.
- d. Later in his ministry, the men of Anathoth sought to harm Jeremiah (Jer 11:21-23). Near the end of his life, Jeremiah bought a field in Anathoth (Jer 32:7-9). Fausset's Bible Dictionary states, "[It is] now Anata, on a broad ridge, amidst fields of grain, figs, and olives. There are remains of walls, and quarries supplying stone to Jerusalem."
- e. He ministered from the 13th year of Josiah's reign until the captivity of Jerusalem (v.2) years 627-586, 41 years.

2. Jeremiah's Calling (v.4-10)

- a. God called him at about age 21 in **627**.
- b. God's plan for Jeremiah began before his birth (v.5). God formed him, knew him, sanctified him, and ordained him. This is testimony of the omniscience of God. It also confirms human life at conception.
- c. *Just as God had a plan for Jeremiah's life, He also has a plan for your life. Seek to find and follow God's plan for your life.*
- d. Notice Jeremiah's response (v.6). He may not have been trying to get out of this call. It may have been legitimate since he was only about 21 years old. The KJVC states, "He does not plead inability like Moses (Ex 4:10), but rather the inexperience of his youth (cf. Solomon, 1Ki 3:7)." God delights to use those who are not self-confident. (1 Corinthians 1:27) *"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;"*
- e. God assured him that he was not a child and that He would give him the words to say (v.7). *Like Jeremiah, we are to preach the Word (2Ti 4:2).* He must not be afraid of their faces (v.8). Ryrie notes, "Similar words were also spoken to Abraham (Gen 15.1), Moses Num 21:34; Deu 3:2), Daniel (Dan 10:12, 19), Mary (Luk 1:30), Peter (Luk 5:10), and Paul (Ac 27:24)." ^{Study Notes} "Our pulpits today desperately need men to speak with authority what God has written down in His Word." ^{J.V. McGee} God also promised to deliver him from opposition.
- f. God then, put His words in Jeremiah's mouth (v.9). "The symbolic,

though historical, act of touching the lips of the prophet was a sign that God would frame in his mouth what he would speak. In the same manner, Isaiah's lips were touched with a hot coal (Is 6:7)." ^{KJVC}

- g. God gave him a clear but difficult task (v.10). "God never calls without also providing the enablement." ^{KJVC}
- h. *We may feel inadequate to speak for the Lord, but as long as we have His words in our mouth and are doing His will, He will enable us. We need not fear.*

3. Confirmation of Jeremiah's Calling (v.11-16)

- a. First, he saw an *almond rod* (v.11). Ironside commenting this states, "The almond, the Hebrews called "the hastening tree," because of its early budding when the cold of winter had scarcely passed away." The next verse, (v.12) completes this picture.
- b. Second, he saw a *seething pot* (v.13). The word "*seething*" means to be blown. When a fire under a pot is fanned or blown, it gets very hot and the contents will overflow. The pot symbolised Babylon in the north that would overflow and its boiling contents would cover Judah (v.14-15). This judgment would come because of the wickedness and idolatry of Judah (v.16).

4. God's Encouragement (v.17-19)

- a. God gave Jeremiah several brief commands. *These ought to encourage us as well!*
 - 1) Jeremiah must *gird up his loins*. In other words, "Tuck your robe into your belt and prepare for work and action."
 - 2) He must then *arise*. He could not do the work God commissioned him to do if he sat still in Anathoth.
 - 3) Then he must *speak unto them all that God commanded him*. He must not remain silent. He must speak out.
 - 4) Finally, God commanded, "*Be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.*" In other words, "Do not be afraid of them or **I will** give you something to be afraid of."
- b. God assured him that He had made Jeremiah *like a defenced city*... (v.18). God promised to protect him against the whole land, the kings, the princes, the priests and the people. Later, each of these persecuted him.
- c. Though they would fight against Jeremiah, note God's reassuring promise (v.19).
- d. *When you do God's work in God's way, you will never lack God's protection and supply.*