

Purpose

To urge God's people to turn from their sins and to turn back to God

Meaning of Name

"God lifts up or exalts"

Date Written

During Jeremiah's ministry, approximately 627-586 BC

Setting

Jeremiah ministered under Judah's last five kings. The nation was sliding quickly toward destruction and was eventually conquered by Babylon (586 BC). The prophet Zephaniah preceded Jeremiah, and Habakkuk was Jeremiah's contemporary.

Key Verse

"Your own wickedness will punish you. You will see what an evil, bitter thing it is to forsake the Lord your God!" *Jeremiah 2:19*

Key People

Judah's kings (listed above), Baruch, Ebed-melech, Nebuchadnezzar, the Recabites

Special Features

This book is a combination of history, poetry, and biography. Jeremiah often used symbolism to communicate his message.

An Overview (52 Chapters)

- God's Judgment of Judah (*1:1-45:5*)
- God's Judgment on the Nations (*46:1-52:34*)

Major Themes

- *Sin*: Judah's deterioration and disaster came from a callous disregard and disobedience of God. When we ignore sin and refuse to listen to God's warnings, we invite disaster.
- *Punishment*: Because of sin, Jerusalem was destroyed, the Temple was ruined, and the people were captured and carried off to Babylon. The people were responsible for their destruction and captivity because they refused to listen to God.
- *God Is Lord of All*: God is the righteous Creator. He is accountable to no one but Himself. He wisely and lovingly directs all creation to fulfill His plans, and He brings events to pass according to His timetable. He is Lord over all the world.
- *New Hearts*: Jeremiah predicted that after the destruction of the nation, God would send a new shepherd, the Messiah. He would lead them into a new future, a new covenant, and a new day of hope. He would accomplish this by changing their sinful hearts into hearts of love for God.
- *Faithful Service*: Jeremiah served God faithfully for 40 years. During that time the people ignored, rejected, and persecuted him. Jeremiah's preaching was unsuccessful by human standards, yet he did not fail. People's acceptance or rejection of us is not the measure of our success. God's approval alone should be our standard for service. We must do God's work even if it means suffering for it.