

Our Title Deed to Forever

Jeremiah 32

Introduction: Jeremiah lived and prophesied in Jerusalem just before the siege and destruction of that city by the Babylonians.

Assyria invaded Israel (10 tribes) in 732 BC
Babylon invaded Judah (2 tribes) in 586 BC

He warned Judah that Babylon was coming as a consequence of their covenant breaking lives and that they would go into exile. Jeremiah lived through it and was among the captives who were taken away.

We read about this in 2 Kings 24-25.

After 40 years of preaching to Jerusalem, God called him to collect all of his sermons and place them in a canon (Jer 36). A scribe named, Baruch, actually did the work.

This is one of the reasons, as you read the book, Jeremiah appears so repetitive. What you're reading is actually a collection of his sermons over four decades of preaching wherein his message remained unchanged: judgement and hope – although he changed the metaphors to describe what Israel had done and what God was doing.

First: An Overview of the Book

Ch 1-24 = Accusations and Warnings for Judah – He compares Judah to a prostitute

Ch 25 – Jeremiah prophesies that Babylon is coming, and that Judah will go into a 70-year captivity (Daniel read this prophecy 9:2 and began to intercede for Judah's release) – He compares Babylon to a cup of wine, filled to the brim and overflowing

Ch 26-45 – Jeremiah focuses on Babylon's war against Judah

Ch 46-51 – Jeremiah focuses on Babylon's war against the other nations

In effect, Jeremiah is prophesying to a dying nation whom God has greatly used but who has also turned its back on God.

Second: Summing up God's Complaint

Jeremiah 5:21-25 - *Hear this, O foolish and senseless people, who have eyes, but see not, who have ears, but hear not. ²² Do you not fear me? declares the LORD. Do you not tremble before*

me? I placed the sand as the boundary for the sea, a perpetual barrier that it cannot pass; though the waves toss, they cannot prevail; though they roar, they cannot pass over it.
²³ But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and gone away.
²⁴ They do not say in their hearts, 'Let us fear the LORD our God, who gives the rain in its season, the autumn rain and the spring rain, and keeps for us the weeks appointed for the harvest.'
²⁵ Your iniquities have turned these away, and your sins have kept good from you.

- a) The people are living as though they are blind and deaf 21
- b) To God's power 22
- c) Which they have rejected 23
- d) In spite of God's goodness to them 24
- e) And, as a result, their sin has kept them from good 25

And yet, with every other prophet, Jeremiah's prophecies contain both judgement and hope

Jeremiah 1:10 - See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.

IMP: God's judgment is restorative, not punitive. There is always hope because God has predicted a future that is dependent on him alone.

Third: The Hope Judah Possesses

ILL – Elephant owner tells crowd he will give \$100 to anyone who can make the elephant jump and move head side to side. Man shoots elephant in behind with slingshot and nail. Elephant jumps on owner who goes to hospital for 20 years so slingshot man can't continue challenge. Out of hospital, elephant owner resumes the same challenge. Older but same man comes out of crowd, shows elephant slingshot and nail and says, "*Do you want me to do this again?*" Elephant shakes head from side to side and man collects \$100.00.

In chapters 30-33, Jeremiah references Moses's prediction that Israel would break God's covenant, the Lord would judge the nation but that he would also restore them and Jeremiah, like that elephant, remembers.

This is the great promise of Jeremiah and one of the more famous passages from the book -

Jeremiah 31:31-34 - Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. ³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying,

‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

In spite of Judah’s apostasy, God, and not their sin, will have the final word. God will be faithful to himself and his word to deliver the promises he has made.

- a) This hope is seen in Babylon’s judgement - Chapters 50-51 – Even though God used Babylon to carry out his justice, he doesn’t endorse their pride, idolatry or violence and he will judge them. God’s judgement is bi-lateral and this is a warning to the church as well as to the world.
- b) This hope is seen in Jehoiachin’s life

Just as Micah and Nahum reduced the nation of Israel to one person so that we could better understand the story, Jeremiah also reduces Israel to one man, the king of Judah, Jehoiachin (who had been placed on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar but only reigned 3 months before Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and who surrendered the city to Nebuchadnezzar) .

Jeremiah 52:31-34 - And in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, Evil-merodach king of Babylon [Nebuchadnezzar’s son], in the year that he began to reign, graciously freed Jehoiachin king of Judah and brought him out of prison. ³² And he spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat above the seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon. ³³ So Jehoiachin put off his prison garments. And every day of his life he dined regularly at the king’s table, ³⁴ and for his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, according to his daily needs, until the day of his death, as long as he lived.

The point is that, as terrible as God’s judgement is, he will keep his promises to his people because He is who he says he is.

Fourth: The Title Deed to Hope

- a) The City under siege

In the fall of 588 BC, Jeremiah cried, *“Behold, the siege mounds have come up to the city to take it”* (32:34). Eleven months later, Babylon did take the city.

- b) God’s command to Jeremiah

32:6-8 - The word of the LORD came to me: ⁷ Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle will come to you and say, ‘Buy my field that is at Anathoth, for the right of redemption by purchase is yours.’ ⁸ Then Hanamel my cousin came to me in the court of the guard, in accordance with the word of the LORD, and said to me, ‘Buy my field that is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin,

for the right of possession and redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.’ Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD.

c) Seventeen shekels of hope

32:9-12 - And I bought the field at Anathoth from Hanamel my cousin, and weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. ¹⁰ I signed the deed, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the money on scales. ¹¹ Then I took the sealed deed of purchase, containing the terms and conditions and the open copy. ¹² And I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my cousin, in the presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, and in the presence of all the Judeans who were sitting in the court of the guard.

d) The symbol of God’s promise

32:13-15 - I charged Baruch in their presence, saying, ¹⁴ ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware vessel, that they may last for a long time [a time-capsule]. ¹⁵ For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.’

e) The basis of Jeremiah’s (and our) hope

- *“Nothing will ever separate us.... We’ll probably be married another ten years.”* (Elizabeth Taylor, five days before announcing her divorce from Richard Burton in 1984)
- *“If excessive smoking actually plays a role in the production of lung cancer, it seems to be a minor one.”* (Dr. W. C. Heuper, National Cancer Institute, 1954)
- *“I don’t need bodyguards.”* (Jimmy Hoffa, one month before his disappearance in July 1975)
- *“Dewey is sure to be elected.”* (Drew Pearson, October 14, 1948)
- *“I would like to suggest that Ronald Reagan is politically dead.”* (Tom Pettit, NBC correspondent, January 1980)
- *“The United States will not be a threat to us for decades — not in 1945 but at the earliest in 1970 or 1980.”* (Adolf Hitler, 1940)
- *“I tell you Wellington is a bad general, the English are bad soldiers; we will settle the matter by lunch time.”* (Napoleon Bonaparte, at breakfast with his generals on June 18, 1815 — the morning of the Battle of Waterloo)
- *“The cinema is little more than a fad. It’s canned drama. What audiences really want to see is flesh and blood on the stage.”* (Charlie Chaplin, 1916)
- *“Gone With the Wind is going to be the biggest flop in Hollywood history. I’m just glad it’ll be Clark Gable who’s falling flat on his face and not Gary Cooper.”* (Gary Cooper, after turning down the role of Rhett Butler, 1938)

- *“That’s an amazing invention, but who would ever want to use one of them?”* (President Rutherford B. Hayes, 1876, on the telephone)
- *“I think there is a world market for about five computers.”* (Thomas J. Watson, Chairman of IBM, 1943)
- *“Man will not fly for fifty years.”* (Wilbur Wright, 1901)

32:16-17 - *After I had given the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD, saying: ¹⁷ ‘Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.*

f) The history of God’s goodness

32:18-22 - *You show steadfast love to thousands, but you repay the guilt of fathers to their children after them, O great and mighty God, whose name is the LORD of hosts, ¹⁹ great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of the children of man, rewarding each one according to his ways and according to the fruit of his deeds. ²⁰ You have shown signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and to this day in Israel and among all mankind, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day. ²¹ You brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and with great terror. ²² And you gave them this land, which you swore to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey.*

g) The promise to restore Israel and Judah

32:37-41 - *Behold, I will gather them from all the countries to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation. I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in safety. ³⁸ And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. ³⁹ I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. ⁴⁰ I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. ⁴¹ I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.*

h) The end of Jeremiah’s purchase

32:42-44 - *For thus says the LORD: Just as I have brought all this great disaster upon this people, so I will bring upon them all the good that I promise them. ⁴³ Fields shall be bought in this land of which you are saying, ‘It is a desolation, without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.’ ⁴⁴ Fields shall be bought for money, and deeds shall be signed and sealed and witnessed, in the land of Benjamin, in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the Shephelah, and in the cities of the Negeb; for I will restore their fortunes, declares the LORD.”*

Calvin Miller in *Edges - The edge is a good address. It is a good place to remember our temporariness. It teaches us to spend our time wisely. So our last days can become our best days. Life is good. So is God. And life with God is full of glorious daybreaks. After all, it was God who gave me the courage to walk the edges of a life that was never mine! May we all not take for granted each and every daybreak and remember we are living a life that is ultimately not ours.*

Conclusion:

True story: In the 1980's a young man in Fort Worth, Tx, took his girlfriend on an evening motorcycle ride where they were struck by a semi-truck and died. Sometime later another young man shared his conversion story in church. "I came up on a motorcycle accident and asked the dying young man if I could help him. He replied, 'no, but I can help you. Have you ever trusted Jesus as your Savior?' He died before the ambulance arrived but I was born again that night."

Whether perceived or actual, we are born to hardship (Job 5:7) and the world is full of trouble (John 16:33). Salvation does not save us from sorrow. Instead, it teaches us how to endure hardship with hope – and there is hope in every heartache.

Why?

Because our title deed to everlasting life and a forever home lies buried where Jesus's body is not; in an empty tomb.

Jeremiah 32:17 - Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you

Community Groups:

- 1 – How are you doing?
- 2 – In what areas of life are you thriving?
- 3 – In what areas of life are you suffering?
- 4 – What great truths have you taken away from the book of Jeremiah so far?
- 5 – What is God's complaint against Judah?
- 6 – How is God's judgement restorative?
- 7 – What has God promised Judah in both judgement and hope?

8 – What is the basis of Judah’s hope?

9 – What does God tell Jeremiah to do?

10 – Why is this instruction so incredible?

11 – How do Jeremiah’s 17 shekels become a symbol of hope?

12 – Why does Jeremiah review God’s past faithfulness to Judah?

13 – What history of God’s work in your life can provide you with hope about the future?

14 – What does the empty tomb say about our hope?

15 – Where do you need hope?

16 – How can you apply the book of Jeremiah to your life?