

God's Sad News

Chapter 7

Audio Lesson: Old Testament #67



Objective: To understand more about God's messages through Jeremiah and how He used this prophet.



"This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

—Jeremiah 31:33

There were two kinds of people in Jerusalem as the city was falling to the Babylonian empire: those who realized the captivity was chastisement from God and accepted His discipline; and those who refused to recognize it as God's will and rebelled. To those who were willing to go to Babylon in judgment and repent of their sinfulness, God promised His help. He would see that they were treated well, give them new hearts that could respond to Him, and bring the next generation back to Jerusalem. But to those who rejected Jeremiah's message and would not repent, God warned that they would experience defeat, famine, and disease until they were destroyed.

Jeremiah preached many sermons about these two kinds of people, and he was often mocked for always delivering sad news. But his preaching was the only hope of the Jews who heard his sermons, and his prophecies of future restoration and the Messiah continue to give us hope today.



1. True or false? Even though God is always willing to forgive us, sometimes the scars and consequences of our sins are irreversible.
2. True or false? Jeremiah preached that we are the captains of our own fate.
3. True or false? Jeremiah spoke harshly about those who trust in their own ability to guide and rescue themselves.
4. True or false? The book of Jeremiah ends with the prophet rejoicing and celebrating God's favor.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. What illustration did Jeremiah use as a description of people who did not accept his message that their captivity was God's chastisement?
 - a. Filthy clothes
 - b. Rotten figs
 - c. Straying goats
 - d. Spilled wine
6. Jeremiah was not the only person in Scripture to use a farming illustration of plowed ground. Who else did?
 - a. Moses
 - b. David
 - c. Elijah
 - d. Jesus
7. What did the four kinds of soil in Jesus' parable represent?
 - a. Four responses to the good news of salvation
 - b. The four kingdoms of God
 - c. The four ways of salvation
 - d. Four kinds of fruit that were available in Israel
8. When Jeremiah urged the people to break up their fallow ground, what did he want them to do?
 - a. Practice better farming techniques to grow a better crop
 - b. Dig up the earth around Jerusalem so the Babylonians could sow their seeds
 - c. Be prepared to receive the seed of God's Word
 - d. Bury all of their copies of Scripture so the enemy could not take them
9. How did Jeremiah respond when the people mocked his "sad news"?
 - a. He told them that they themselves were the sad news and rebuked them for mocking God's Word.
 - b. He tried to find something happier to talk about.
 - c. He told God he was not going to preach anymore.
 - d. He picked up stones to throw at them.

10. How do we know Jeremiah was a true prophet?
- a. He looked like a prophet.
 - b. His father was a prophet and trained Jeremiah to be a prophet too.
 - c. His prophecies of calamity and of restoration all came true.
 - d. He worked many miracles.
11. Why did Jeremiah advise people not to get married?
- a. Celibacy is more spiritual than marriage.
 - b. As part of His judgment, God forbade marriage for 70 years.
 - c. The temple had been destroyed, so there was no holy place for weddings.
 - d. In a time of captivity and persecution, marrying and having children would only result in families being torn apart.
12. What did Jeremiah prophesy about the hearts of God's people?
- a. God would give His people a new heart and write His laws on their heart.
 - b. They would never accept God in their heart again.
 - c. People would return to God and then fall away again.
 - d. Their hearts were so wicked that God would not be able to redeem them.



Have you experienced God's gift of a new heart? If so, what has changed in your life since you received that gift? If not, do you believe that you need a new heart? Why or why not?



Thank God for the gift of a new heart. Ask Him to continue to work in your heart and in the hearts of people you know. Pray that your heart and life would always overflow with gratitude and praise for Him.



Going Deeper

1. When you look in a mirror, do you see “God’s sad news,” or do you see God’s Good News of the Gospel – a new creation by the grace of God? Why? _____

2. What was the upbeat hope that Jeremiah shared with these people of God regarding their experience of captivity? (Consider Jeremiah 29: 11-14) _____

3. Relate that hope to some of the setbacks you’ve experienced in your journey of faith. _____

4. According to the passage referenced above, how can you apply to your life the things you can do in your “captivity,” and the things God promises to do at that time? _____

5. How do you implement the essential application of the sermon God gave Jeremiah in chapter 18, regarding the vessel that was flawed on the wheel of the potter and recycled? (Consider chapter 18.) _____

6. Jeremiah showed his faith in God’s promise about the return from captivity by purchasing land near Jerusalem, just prior to his captivity. How have you ever demonstrated your faith through an action against all odds, the way Jeremiah showed that he believed his own prophecy about the return from captivity when he purchased the farm of a relative just outside of Jerusalem shortly before the captivity began? _____

7. How can you show people that your faith is authentic, the way the king showed that he believed Jeremiah's preaching when he visited Jeremiah in the dungeon while the siege of Jerusalem was at its peak? _____
