

## Book of Jeremiah

### **Lesson 10: Jeremiah's Message to Kings and Leaders of Judah after Josiah**

**Reading:** Jeremiah 21:1-24:10

#### **Review**

Jeremiah is called by God to be a "prophet to the nations" and to speak primarily to the kingdom of Judah for the purpose of

- Warning the people of God's impending judgment via the kingdom of Babylon
- Calling the people to repentance and spiritual restoration,
- Delivering God's promise of a return to the land after 70 years of captivity, and
- Reminding the remnant left in Canaan to remain faithful to God

Throughout the book of Jeremiah, Judah's spiritual unfaithfulness and proclivity for idolatry is described in graphic detail. As a result, God's judgment is coming at the hands of the Babylonians, and will include the destruction of Jerusalem. Despite the reforms put in place by King Josiah, the people return to the ways of Manasseh through a succession of kings, including Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Each king is a tragic repeat of failed leadership, supplemented by priests and prophets who fail to teach the law and proclaim God's word. As a result, Judah has reached its end, and the people are ripe for judgment. The dire wickedness of the people will only be surpassed by the merciless treatment coming at the hands of Babylon. Judah's condition is so grim that judgment by an invading army is the only lesson they seem capable of learning.

Despite Judah's doomed condition, Jeremiah continues to proclaim God's word and plead to God on behalf of the people, even though God at times tells him not to do so. God uses vivid analogies to demonstrate the terminal state of the people and the judgment that is coming. The people's condition is so bleak that even if Moses and Samuel interceded for the people, it would not change their fate. The people respond to Jeremiah's message by mocking him, questioning the validity of his message, beating and torturing him, and even plotting his death. In the midst of such persecution, Jeremiah experiences moments of confidence in God and His protection, as well as moments of deep despair in which he curses the day of his birth and pleads for God to carry out His word of judgment on his enemies. Throughout each moment, Jeremiah does not lose his faith in God, nor his commitment to his calling from God.

1. What was God's message to King Zedekiah and what was his fate (21:3-7)?
2. What was God's message to the people of Judah (21:8-10)?

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3. How would the destruction of Jerusalem serve as a testimony to other nations (22:8-9)?
4. What was God's message to Jehoahaz and what was his fate (22:11-12)?
5. What was God's message to Jehoiakim and what was his fate (22:13-19)?
6. What was God's message to Coniah/Jehoiachin and what was his fate (22:24-30)?
7. How is the Messiah described in 23:5-6, and how is His leadership contrasted with Judah's leadership?
8. What analogy is used to describe the false prophets, and what is the relationship to God's Word? (23:28-29)
9. How will God punish the people for perverting the word of the Lord through false prophecy (23:33-40)?
10. What is the meaning of the vision of the two baskets of figs (24:4-10)?