

Character Study: Jeremiah

Part 2 – Difficult Days

Jeremiah 2-39

What's happening?

- Jeremiah's ministry began during the reign of King Josiah, a king who made a big impact in bringing the people back to the genuine worship of God (II Kings 22-23). Jeremiah's message encouraged this as well, but when people from his hometown threatened to kill him, it was clear that not everyone was on board (11:18-23).
- Following the death of King Josiah, the rebellious hearts of the people became exposed again, and things quickly got worse for Jeremiah:
 - Jeremiah's warning of God's judgment (5:19; 6:19) was not only ignored (8:6), but he was beaten and put in stocks (20:1-2).
 - False prophets and priests tried to convince the people to put him to death (26:11).
 - Jeremiah had a written prophecy delivered to the people explaining that God would forgive them if they returned to Him, but the message was burned in a fire by the king (36:1-32).
 - Nations invaded Judah as Jeremiah had prophesied (20:4), but when he did not support the people's plan to revolt (27:12), he was accused of treason and put in a dungeon (37:11-15; 38:6).
 - King Zedekiah spoke with Jeremiah on different occasions (27:12-17; 38:14-17), but he did not obey the Lord, which resulted in Jerusalem being taken over by Babylon (39:8).

What's God doing?

> God had told Jeremiah his ministry would not be easy, and it was not. Yet, God protected him and used him to deliver a clear message to Judah, a message which further exposed and confirmed their rebellion.

What's to learn?

→ Just like the response Jeremiah received from people, we too should expect criticism when we try to discuss the issue of sin (reality of sin, consequences of sin, God's judgment toward sin, etc.). Despite this, we must discuss sin if we are to show people their need for a Savior.

→ Even if our service to the Lord feels "unsuccessful," we must learn to be faithful. God is accomplishing His purposes, even if the results are not what we hope. Be faithful and leave the results to God!