

# Character Study: Jeremiah

## Part 4 – Courage and Hope

### Jeremiah 40-52

#### What's happening?

- With the Babylonian captivity and destruction of Jerusalem (586 BC), Jeremiah's prophecies of judgment were being realized. Many people were taken captive to Babylon and the poor were left to care for the land (II Kings 24:14; 25:12). Jeremiah stayed in Judah after being given the option by the Babylonian captain of the guard. (Jer. 40:1-6)
- The King of Babylon appointed Gedaliah governor over the area of Judah, but after he was murdered by Ishmael, the people determined it was best to flee to Egypt. Jeremiah went with them, though he opposed the decision. (40:7-43:7)
- Jeremiah's final years appear to be spent in Egypt. He continued to courageously speak on behalf of God to a people unwilling to listen (44:8-52:34). Despite all the warnings of judgment, Jeremiah also offered hope:
  - Jeremiah emphasized that the people were special vessels to God and that turning to Him would bring blessing (18:1-11).
  - Jeremiah spoke of a New Covenant that would bring forgiveness, as well as a time in which the people would return to their God (Jer. 31:31-34; 33:3, 14-16).
  - Confident in the Lord's promises, Jeremiah purchased land in Judah (32:6-15). Notice his faith in 32:16-17 and hope for the future in 32:36-41.

#### What's God doing?

> Though the people of Jeremiah's day failed to experience God's blessing because of their continual rebellion, God did speak of many blessings to come. Hebrews 8:7-13 and 9:14-15 tell us that we can also experience the blessings of the New Covenant by turning to Christ.

#### What's to learn?

→ After decades of ministry, Jeremiah did not have a list of converts or achievements. The era in which he lived was extremely difficult and hostile toward anyone serious about God. But in that moment and time, God used him to stand for truth, and in turn, he fulfilled his life's purpose.

→ As our generation becomes less welcoming of true followers of Christ, are you willing to courageously stand for truth like Jeremiah did?