

BRIEF PERSPECTIVE ON JEREMIAH 1

The period was one of the worst times in the history of Judah.

Not long before, the people witnessed the destruction of their Northern brothers by the Assyrians and this judgement came after they persistently ignored the warnings of God given by the prophets.

It was a similar situation with Judah. The people mocked the messengers of God, despising His word and scoffed at the prophets (2 Chron 36:16).

It was in this backdrop that God called Jeremiah.

From the human perspective, it is easy to see why Jeremiah initially declined the calling of God. Sure he was a young man (he was approx. 20 years old when the calling of God came) but he wasn't stupid. . He had witnessed the gross idolatry of the people and knew the messages that prophets before him had for the people. Jeremiah must have seen how harshly the prophets were treated. So, for a young man, the call to the office of a prophet wasn't exactly desirable. Indeed, God's assurance to him in verse 8 and once again in verse 18 gave us clues that Jeremiah was afraid of the people.

Let's not fail to see the heart of God.

Despite the persistent disobedience of the people, and the eventual exile of the people to Babylon, God promised hope in that a remnant will be restored (23:3). More importantly, through the remnant, the Righteous Descendant will come and be the ultimate Saviour of the people. It is all in the plan and purpose of God, from the beginning.

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WARMING UP

1. Is there someone who knows you inside out and still loves you?
2. What is your mission in life?

INTO THE PASSAGES

The Call - Read Jeremiah 1:1-5, Eph 1:4

3. Why was the call to service preceded by God's declaration that He knew and formed Jeremiah? Did God buy Jeremiah's excuse?
4. How is our calling in Jesus similar to Jeremiah's calling? What is the link between BCEC's theme and our election in Jesus?

The Mission - Read Jeremiah 1:5-8, Luke 10:27, Matt 29:18-20,

5. What was Jeremiah's mission (verse 5)? What did the LORD do before appointing Jeremiah (verse 9)?
6. Which comes first, the great commandment (Matt 22) or the Great Commission (Matt 28)? What is the Christian calling?

The Message - Read Jeremiah 1: 11-19, 2 Chronicles 36

7. What was the message for Judah? What were the responses of the people?
8. What was the message for Jeremiah? How did Jeremiah respond?

MOVING FORWARD

In the first chapter of Jeremiah, we read about the love of God for Jeremiah. He knew Jeremiah, He formed Jeremiah and He involved Jeremiah in His wonderful plan and purpose. Likewise, God knows us, He formed us and He is involving us in His wonderful plan and purpose (which He has decided even before the foundation of the world).

Don't miss this moment.

The God of Jeremiah is the God of BCEC and He loves us.

Live in the reality that the God of history loves us and beckon us to live according to His plan and purpose. Ask Him to reaffirm what is His plan and purpose for your life.

LIFE TOGETHER

The movement of the people is such that there are now many nations in Birmingham.

- If you are a parent, survey the fellow parents of the school that your children go to
- If you are in university or in school, survey among your classmates
- If you are in the workplace, survey among your colleagues, where they originally came from

Just as Jeremiah was a prophet to the nations, BCEC is also a prophetic voice among the nations.

March being Missions Month, determine to be there for the Missions Weekend to discover the role(s) that God has for you in your ministry to the nations.

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These notes are primarily for the Into the Passage portion, and are to be used just as guidelines or commentary notes. Most of them are my own thoughts, so take that with a grain of salt. Let the Word of God lead you to truth, not these notes.

INTO THE PASSAGES

The Call - Read Jeremiah 1:1-5, Eph 1:4

3. Why was the call to service preceded by God's declaration that He knew and formed Jeremiah? Did God buy Jeremiah's excuse?

The call to service is preceded by the call to relationship. God knew (and loved) Jeremiah intimately. This love existed even before He formed Jeremiah.

No, God did not accept Jeremiah's excuse but demanded his obedience instead.

4. How is our calling in Jesus similar to Jeremiah's calling? What is the link between BCEC's theme and our election in Jesus?

God's plan in redemption of His people through His Son, Jesus Christ, was decided before the foundation of the earth! God love us from the very beginning. There was never a time when God did not love us.

Those identified as God's people are given the Spirit of God, and the giving of the Spirit of God is a guarantee that we will receive the glorious inheritance that God has promised us in Jesus Christ.

The Mission - Read Jeremiah 1:5-8, Luke 10:27, Matt 29:18-20,

5. What was Jeremiah's mission (verse 5)? What did the LORD do before appointing Jeremiah (verse 9)?

Jeremiah was called to be a prophet to the nations (Jer 45-51) where he prophesied to the nations of Egypt, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damas us, Kedar, Hazor, Elam and Babylon. God was speaking to the nations!

Although God did not accept Jeremiah's excuse, He touched Jeremiah's mouth. This is significant as it is God will empower His people for ministry.

6. Which comes first, the great commandment (Matt 22) or the Great Commission (Matt 28)? What is the Christian calling?

The call to love God is preceded by the call to serve God. More importantly, the call to love God is preceded by the love of God. The person who knows that he is loved by God; he is the person who loves God. And the person who loves God is the person who wants to serve God.

The Christian must know that he is beloved of God, not just in head knowledge but personally, and experientially.

The Message - Read Jeremiah 1: 11-19, 2 Chronicles 36

7. What was the message for Judah? What were the responses of the people?

Judgement in the form of destruction of Jerusalem and all the towns of Judah if the people do not repent of their desertion of God and of their idolatry. The king (who represented the people) continued to do evil in the eyes of the Lord (2 Chron 36:5, 9, 11)

8. What was the message for Jeremiah? How did Jeremiah respond?

Jer 1:17 - Go out and tell them everything I tell you to say. Do not be afraid of them.

Jeremiah responded in obedience and the rest of the book attested to this and this was illustrated beautifully in Jer 13. God led Jeremiah bit by bit and Jeremiah obeyed completely.