

October 5, 2025

“Jeremiah’s Call and Arrest”
Lesson 1

Jer. 1:6-10, 26:8-9, 12-15

Intro

Today’s passage looks at God’s purposes in the history of nations and the role of prophets in announcing and interpreting these events. Jeremiah was a prophet for about 70 years, from roughly 627-557 BC. He was active during the time that Babylon destroyed the city walls and the temple in Jerusalem in 586 BC, and took most of the nation into exile.

Read Jeremiah 1:6-10

1. vs. 6: This is Jeremiah’s response to God calling him to be a prophet in vs. 5
He says that he is “too young” and doesn’t “know how to speak”
This is like the objections raised by others when they were called by God
Think of Moses (Ex. 4:10), Isaiah (Is.6:5), and Amos (Amos 7:14)
He was a Levite and already serving as a priest, suggesting he was at least 25 years old
2. vs. 7: God shuts down Jeremiah’s objection in two ways
He tells him not to consider his age or experience; forget about that
He also tells Jeremiah that He will tell him what to say (“whatever I command you”)
This could be plans for the future, a calling out of sin, a call for repentance
Prophets frequently gave warning of God’s potential punishment
They also gave promises of God’s blessings for those who listen, repent, and obey
3. vs. 8: God tells him not to be afraid of the people—God Himself will be with Jeremiah
The KJV says “Do not be afraid of their faces”
Jeremiah is going to be in the physical presence of people who will reject his message
Seeing their angry faces and hearing vocal objections can be intimidating
God says not to be afraid; He will be with Jeremiah during these times
4. vs. 9: God then touches Jeremiah’s mouth and puts His words into Jeremiah’s mouth
This reminds us of Isaiah, when he said he was “a man of unclean lips”
An angel touches his lips with a burning coal, a spiritual cleansing/empowering
God Himself does this same action with Jeremiah
He empowers Jeremiah to speak what God wants said
Jeremiah doesn’t have to think about what to say; God will give it to him
5. vs. 10: This verse shows God in control, deciding what will happen to “nations and kingdoms”
Two analogies work well here
One is a gardener, who plucks up the weeds and plants the good growth
Two is a potter, who takes a material and shapes it how He wants it to be
God gives Jeremiah a message that says some nations and kingdoms will fall
They will be uprooted and torn down, destroyed and overthrown

Being destroyed means that nation/kingdom will no longer exist
But Jeremiah also gets to preach that God will build and plant also
This could refer to buildings and walls, as well as to nations and kingdoms

Read Jeremiah 26:8-9

6. vs. 8: This is now the result of Jeremiah's speaking God's words—all want to kill him
He has gone to Jerusalem to speak God's message to King Jehoiakim (Jer. 26:1)
The main point of the message is that the people are mistaken in expecting peace
Jeremiah says God wants them to keep the law and turn from their evil ways
If they don't, they will be like Shiloh—a deserted site (Jer. 26:6)
The reaction we see here is the result of hearing this message
The people don't see the need for repentance or change
Instead they are intent on killing the messenger
7. vs. 9: The people understand what Jeremiah is saying about the temple becoming like Shiloh
They instead say and act like he is wrong, that he is not God's prophet
They choose instead to believe what the temple's false prophets are saying about peace

Read Jer. 26:12-15

8. vs. 12: Despite the death threats, Jeremiah continues to speak God's message
He doesn't fear what will happen, because God said He would be with him
He reminds the people that this is God's message, not Jeremiah's
This is God's judgment, not his own
9. vs. 13: This is a simple and direct statement
Reform your ways and your actions – repent
Obey the Lord's voice—follow the Law
If they will do that, God will not carry out the judgment He has chosen
This is what is called a “conditional prophecy”
God says what will happen *if* a certain course is taken
If the action is changed, God's actions will also change
10. vs. 14: Jeremiah has spoken God's message to the people
Now he puts himself into their hands
Only a strong confidence in God would allow him to do that under these circumstances
Jeremiah doesn't know if he will be saved or killed
He has put his faith in God who called him and told him not to be afraid
11. vs. 15: He issues a warning to them if they do choose to kill him
He is innocent, so his death would be murder, bringing blood on his killers
This includes both the city and all its citizens
The shedding of innocent blood was one of Jeremiah's biggest accusations to them
(See Jer. 7:6 and 22:3)
In vs. 16, some officials / elders intervene, and Jeremiah's life is spared

However, there is no sign that the people have heeded his warnings and repented
Jerusalem's destruction is still on track for fulfillment

Application: Jeremiah knew from the start that obeying God's call and speaking what God told him to would be difficult. We may not be called to speak in places of social power. But wherever we are put in life, speaking truth may be just as challenging for us as it was for Jeremiah. And that may happen at an early stage in our spiritual lives. Speaking the truth is not just for mature believers. Whatever the things are in our heads that tells us we can't or we shouldn't speak, we have to remember that we have been called by God to be His witnesses to the world, both in our words and our actions. Let us follow the example of Jeremiah.

Prayer: Father God, help us to yield our hearts and lives to you, to the loving relationship You desire with each person. Help us find ways to serve You and Your people. Help us to be faithful but never fearful. In Jesus' name, Amen.