

Jeremiah: Called to Speak the Truth

Scripture Focus: [Jeremiah 1:1-19](#)

626 BCE was a year of great significance. In the first place, it is thought to be the beginning of Jeremiah's prophetic ministry. At this time, Josiah was king of Judah and began to seek to obey the Lord, unlike Josiah's father and grandfather who were notorious for their idolatrous practices. Yet very challenging days were ahead as the people continued to rebel against God. As time passes, King Jehoiakim and King Zedekiah would lead the people further away from the Lord resulting in the captivity of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile. (2 Kings 24:20)

God Calls Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:4-8)

Jeremiah's call begins with God informing him that he was chosen before he was even born (v. 5). Look carefully at the verses and notice God's words to Jeremiah, and then Jeremiah's words to God.

- What do you notice about this conversation between God and Jeremiah?
- Does this remind you of any other similar exchange between a person God called and that person's response as recorded in Scripture?

The Nature of God's Message (Jeremiah 1:9-10)

Notice that the LORD (Yehweh), has promised to put his words in the mouth of Jeremiah. The words will not be Jeremiah's, but God's. From these verses we gather that God's message communicated through Jeremiah will indeed be double-edged, negative and positive.

- The judgmental, even destructive aspect of Jeremiah's ministry is revealed in the following verbs: **pluck up, pull down, destroy, and overthrow.** (10b)
- The positive, redemptive aspect is found in verbs – **to build and to plant.** (10c)

Certainly, it is much easier to dwell on the positive aspects of the message of God, yet it is also critical to understand that disobedience to God has consequences. We need to be regularly warned concerning what happens when, individually or collectively, we turn our backs on God, when God is forsaken. See Jeremiah 1:16.

The Promise God Makes to Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:17-19)

Once more, there is good news and bad news for Jeremiah in these verses.

- What is the good news? What is the bad news?
- How might these verses encourage you in your witness for the Lord Jesus Christ, who longs to use you and your life to proclaim his message of love, righteousness, mercy, and justice?

Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. ([Jeremiah 17:7](#))