

Jeremiah: What is Happening and Why?

Background Information to Remember

Let's be reminded! Jeremiah was a prophet, the son of Hilkiah, who lived in the priestly city of Anathoth, located a few miles north of the city of Jerusalem. Jeremiah's ministry lasted 50 years and spanned the reigns of five kings. His ministry endured for 40 years (from approximately 626 to 586 BCE) in Judah, its last 40 years of existence (the Southern Kingdom) and beyond that as an exile in Egypt, where he ministered to a rebellious remnant of the Jewish people for approximately 10 more years. Sent by God, he proclaimed messages of irreversible judgment to the kings, rulers, and people of Judah. Jeremiah was despised for speaking the truth.

Jeremiah prophesized during the time when there was a three-cornered struggle for world domination among Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon. Babylon would emerge victorious over Judah.

Grounding Scripture: [Jeremiah 5:1-31](#)

1. Notice the way in which chapter five begins, especially the first three verses. What do these opening verses communicate to you about the nature of God and what God desires?
2. What do the opening verses reveal about the people of Judah?
3. In 5:18-19, the narrative contains a promise, a question, and an answer. What is the promise from God and then what is the question posed by the people of Judah followed by God's answer?
4. Verses 5:21-29 contain clear descriptions of the people's attitude toward God and their behavior toward others, all so offensive to God. How does the condition of their hearts affect their behavior toward others? What about our hearts and the ways in which we treat others, especially the most vulnerable?
5. Now, based on what you have considered in this lesson, what might the Spirit be saying to each of us about our relationship to God and our actions toward others?

Verse to Remember: Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. ([James 1:27](#))