

**THE REMNANT AND THE RIGHTEOUS BRANCH**  
**PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE: JEREMIAH**  
**Jeremiah 23:1-8**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**A. TITLE**

1. HEBREW = **Yirmeyahu**—short form **Yirmeyah**
  - Literal meaning = “Yahweh throws”
  - Practical meaning = Yahweh sends, appoints, establishes
2. SEPTUAGINT = **Hieremias**
3. LATIN = **Jeremias**

**B. AUTHORSHIP**

1. JEREMIAH—ATTESTED IN **1:1**
2. TWO VERSIONS OF EARLY RECORDING
  - a. Dictated prophecies to secretary Baruch (son of Neriah)
  - b. From beginning of ministry to fourth year of King Jehoiakim
    - God commanded him to record message—**36:1-3**
    - Jeremiah dictated scroll to Baruch--**36:4-8**
    - Baruch read scroll read in Temple—**36:9-19**
    - Scroll destroyed by king—**36:20-26**
  - c. After destruction of first scroll
    - Jeremiah dictated fuller version—**36:27-32**
    - Then added later sections
3. CHAPTER 52—PROBABLY NOT WRITTEN BY JEREMIAH
  - a. Chapter 51 ends with—*Thus far are the words of Jeremiah*
  - b. Material is almost identical to II Kings 24:18-25:30
  - c. Probably added by Baruch
4. ATTRIBUTED BY EXTERNAL SOURCES
  - Ecclesiasticus—Josephus—Talmud

**C. JEREMIAH**

1. SON OF HILKIAH THE PRIEST

- a. Probably not High Priest Hilkiah—discovered Book of the Law in Temple—**II Kgs 22:8**
  - The high priest lived in Jerusalem
- b. *Possibly*—descended from Abiathar
  - Priest banished by Solomon to Anathoth for role in Adonijah’s rebellion—**I Kgs 2:26**

## 2. HOMETOWN—ANATHOTH

- 2-3 miles northeast of Jerusalem
- In the territory of Benjamin
- On of 48 cities Joshua gave to the Levites—**Josh 21:18**

## 3. PROBABLY NEVER SERVED AS A PRIEST

- Priests began ministry at age 30
- But Jeremiah was a young man when called as a prophet—**1:6**

## 4. UNMARRIED

- God did not allow him to marry—as an object lesson to Judah—**16:1-4**

## 5. LIFE OF CONFLICT

- a. Threatened in his own hometown—beaten and publicly humiliated
- b. Tried for life by priests and prophets of Jerusalem
- c. Put in stocks
- d. Had to flee from King Jehoiakim
- e. Publicly humiliated by prophet Hananiah
- f. Thrown into a cistern
- g. The ‘Weeping Prophet’—**9:1** and **13:17**

## C. DATE AND SETTING

### 1. DATES JEREMIAH PROPHESED—627-580

- Started as a youth in 13<sup>th</sup> year of Josiah’s reign—**1:2**

### 2. CONTEMPORARY OF THESE PROPHETS

- Zephaniah
- Habakkuk
- Daniel
- Ezekiel

### 3. DURING THE REIGNS—OF ONE GOOD KING AND FIVE BAD KINGS/RULERS

- a. **Josiah**—good king
  - Killed (609) by Pharaoh Necho of Egypt
- b. **Jehoahaz**—bad king
  - After 3 months deposed by Pharaoh Necho
- c. **Jehoiakim**—bad king
  - Egyptian vassal until Babylonians defeated Egypt (605)
  - Then Babylonian vassal—but rebelled against Babylon
  - Nebuchadnezzar deported key people like Daniel to Babylon
- d. **Jehoiachin**—bad king
  - Reigned 3 months—deported to Babylon (597)
- e. **Zedekiah**—bad king
  - Attempted alliance with Egypt—led to Babylonian capture of Jerusalem (586)
- f. **Gedaliah**—Nebuchadnezzar’s governor

### 4. THREE PHASES OF PROPHETIC MINISTRY

- 627-605—while Judah was threatened by Assyria and Egypt
- 605-586—while Judah was threatened by Babylon
- 586-580—in Jerusalem and Egypt—after defeat of Judah

## D. BIBLICAL CONTEXT

### ❖ QUOTED IN FIVE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

- [Matthew 2 and 21](#)
- [Mark 11](#)
- [Luke 19](#)
- [Romans 11](#)
- [Hebrews 8](#)

## E. THEMES

1. EMPHASIS ON THE EXODUS AS ISRAEL’S DOMINANT SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE
2. CALL TO REPENTANCE—MENTIONED IN SOME FORM 111 TIMES
3. JUDGMENT FOR UNREPENTANT BEHAVIOR

- Idolatry

- Immorality
- Dependence on foreign alliances
- Refusal to submit to God's judgment

#### 4. CULPABILITY OF BAD LEADERS—CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS

- Who have scattered the sheep—and not cared for them
- False prophets who offer false hope

#### 5. YAHWEH'S SOVEREIGNTY

- As Creator
- Superintending history
- Lord of all nations

#### 6. PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE

- Coming Messiah—a Righteous Branch/King
- Restoration of Remnant

#### 7. PROMISE OF THE NEW COVENANT

### F. STRUCTURE

#### 1. PROBLEM

- a. Book is not chronological
- b. Oracles/sermons during different reigns—move back and forth
- c. Historical events out of order—some prophecies precede current/past events
- d. No organized structure of themes

#### 2. FOUR PARTS

##### a. **Part One: Jeremiah's Call—chapter 1**

##### b. **Part Two: Prophecies against Judah—chapters 2-45**

1. Condemnation of Judah—in 12 sermons/oracles—**chapters 2-25**
  - Culminates with prophecy of 70-year captivity—**chapter 25**
2. Four Conflicts of Jeremiah—**chapters 26-29**
  - With the nation—false prophets—Hananiah—Shemaiah
3. Future Restoration of Jerusalem—**chapters 30-33**
  - Key text—the New Covenant—**chapter 31**

4. Present Fall of Jerusalem—**chapters 34-45**
  - a. Messages and Events before the Fall—**chapters 34-38**
  - b. Events during the Fall—**chapter 39**
  - c. Messages after Fall—**chapters 40-44**
  - d. Message to Baruch—**chapter 45**
- c. **Part Three: Prophecies to 9 Gentile Nations—chapters 46-51**
  - Egypt
  - Philistia
  - Moab
  - Ammon
  - Edom
  - Damascus
  - Kedar and Hazor
  - Elam
  - Babylon
- d. **Part Four: The Fall of Jerusalem—chapter 51**

## II. BIBLICAL TEXT—23:1-8

**1** *“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” declares the Lord. 2 Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel concerning the shepherds who are tending My people: “You have scattered My flock and driven them away, and have not attended to them; behold, I am about to attend to you for the evil of your deeds,” declares the Lord. 3 “Then I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and bring them back to their pasture, and they will be fruitful and multiply. 4 I will also raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them; and they will not be afraid any longer, nor be terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the Lord. 5 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. 6 “In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The Lord our righteousness.’ 7 “Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when they will no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ 8 but, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.”*

## III. EXPOSITION

### A. SUMMARY

#### 1. PROPHECY OF IMMEDIATELY FUTURE EVENTS

- The LORD will punish Israel’s leaders for harming the nation—**vv1-2**
- He will restore His people—a remnant—to their land—**vv3-4**

- He will appoint a wise and just ruler to care for the nation—**vv5-6**
- This restoration will be even greater than the Exodus—**vv7-8**

## 2. LONG-TERM MESSIANIC IMPLICATIONS

- God will send a Good Shepherd to care for His flock
- He will reclaim all His sheep—all of Israel and other sheep beyond
- He will establish His kingdom through the Messiah—a righteous descendant of David
- His new kingdom will be even greater than Israel of the past

## B. GOD WILL PUNISH EVIL RULERS—**verses 1-2**

**1** *“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” declares the Lord. 2 Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel concerning the shepherds who are tending My people: “You have scattered My flock and driven them away, and have not attended to them; behold, I am about to attend to you for the evil of your deeds,” declares the Lord.*

### 1. A WOE ORACLE UPON BAD ‘SHEPHERDS’

### 2. WHO WERE THE BAD SHEPHERDS?

- a. Generally—all kings/rulers and false prophets—since Josiah
- b. Specific messages against
  - Zedekiah—21:11-22:9
  - Jehoahaz—22:10-12
  - Jehoiakim—22:13-23
  - Jehoiachin—22:24-30

### 3. THEIR GUILT

- a. Pointed accusation—**You have scattered**—**v2**—emphatic ‘you’
- b. Continued action—*are destroying and scattering*—participle indicates ongoing activity
- c. Doing the opposite of what shepherds should do
  - Scattering—not gathering into the fold
  - Destroying—instead of protecting and caring for sheep
- d. Specific actions—like false guides—they mislead the people
  - Allowing/promoting idolatry
  - Immorality behavior (including murder) and activities associated with idolatry
  - Injustice to the poor—dishonest gain
- e. **Ezekiel** also reveals their sins—and pronounces judgment on them—**Ez 34:1-10**
- f. Accountability

- They are directly responsible for the coming exile of Judah

#### 4. PUNISHMENT

- a. Divine punishment—by God

- *I am about to attend to you*
- Wordplay—double meaning—*visit* = *punish*

- b. Graphic description of defeat and destruction of Jerusalem—see **15:1-14**

#### 5. CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

- a. Though leaders are mainly responsible—the whole nation will suffer
- b. God holds the whole nation accountable—for its leadership!

### C. THE GOOD SHEPHERD WILL RESTORE THE REMNANT

**3** *“Then I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and bring them back to their pasture, and they will be fruitful and multiply. 4 I will also raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them; and they will not be afraid any longer, nor be terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the Lord.*”

#### 1. THE LORD ALONE IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

- a. He will personally gather the flock
  - First pronoun “I”—is emphatic in Hebrew—“I for my part”
- b. There is **only one** shepherd over them
  - Ezekiel clarifies this—**Ez 34:23-24**—identifies Him as *my servant David*

#### 2. THE REMNANT

- a. A major theme of Jeremiah—mentioned 19 times
- b. Mentioned elsewhere in the OT
  - [Is 37:32](#)
  - [Ez 5:10](#)
  - [Amos 5:15](#)
  - [Mic 2:12](#)
- c. Their identity—and their rescue
  1. Those scattered sheep—who remain faithful
  2. **Scattered** by two forces—human and divine
    - a. Because of the evil leadership of Judah brought judgment on them
    - b. Because God has driven them away—**v3**

▲ **8:3**—states this remnant is exiled—because **God** drove them away

3. But only God—not those rulers—has the power to bring them back—**v3**

### 3. PROMISE ASSOCIATED WITH RETURN

a. They will *be fruitful and multiply*

- Fulfills mandate of **Gen 1:28**
- Fulfills promise of God’s blessing for obedience at Gerizim—**Dt 28:4**

b. Fulfills promise of God’s eternal covenant with David

- *I will raise up your seed after you*—**II Sam 7:12**

### 4. MANY SHEPHERDS

**4** *I will also raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them*

a. Human shepherds who faithfully serve the One Shepherd

- Already prophesied by Jeremiah—see **3:15-16**

b. **Historical** fulfillment in Judah/Jerusalem

- Like **Ezra—Nehemiah—Zerubbabel—Maccabees**

c. **Future** fulfillment—in the church

1. We are descendants of Abraham—and heirs to his promise—**Gal 2:9**
2. We are a royal priesthood—**I Pe 2:9**
3. We are a kingdom of priests to our God, who reign upon the earth—**Rev 5:10**

## D. THE RIGHTEOUS KING WILL RULE WISELY AND JUSTLY

**5** *“Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land.*

**6** *“In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The Lord our righteousness.’”*

### 1. A MESSIANIC PROPHECY

a. Prophetic formula = *the days are coming*

b. Formula appears 16 times in Jeremiah

c. Key messianic prophecies in the book

- **23:5-6**—**here**
- **30:8-9**—deliverance from captivity—breaking the yoke
- **30:21**—their ruler shall come from their midsts



- **33:15–16**—the Davidic kingdom

## 2. THE MESSAGE

### a. The **Divine King**

1. Human kings failed
2. So—God provides His own ruler—Messiah—Anointed One—Christ
  - **Isaiah** dwells more on prophetic and priestly role
  - **Jeremiah** and other prophets more on **royal** role
3. Davidic root—fulfills eternal covenant—to seat a descendant on his throne—**II Sam 7**

### b. The **Righteous Branch**

1. From *to grow, sprout*
  - Sprouts from the roots of a fallen tree.
  - So—new life will spring forth from the fallen dynasty
2. Used in **33:15**—to describe the Davidic kingdom
3. Used in **Zech 3:8** and **6:12**—clearly as a messianic title
4. Isa 11:1 uses the same idea—“branch”—uses a different Hebrew word
5. Meaning = the ‘right’ branch
  - Phoenicians used word for rightful heir to the throne
  - So—he is the legitimate ruler
6. Will do four things
  - Reign as king
  - Act wisely
  - Do justice and righteousness
  - Will save Judah and secure Israel—**v6**
7. New Testament implications
  - a. Jesus is the coming King—who rules righteously—**Is 9:7**
  - b. Jesus is from the root of Jesse—who brings righteousness and peace—**Is 11:1-9**
  - c. Jesus is the descendant of David—**Rom 1:1-6**
  - d. Jesus is the True Vine—**Jn 15**
  - e. We are grafted onto the olive tree—**Rom 11**

c. Both Judah and Israel—**v6**

1. Literal Israel

- a. Eventually—north and south—will be reunited—as David’s kingdom
- b. Not yet fulfilled—but will be in the end times

▲ Jews will turn to Christ—**Rom 11:26**

2. Spiritual Israel

- a. Fulfilled in the Church
- b. We are the ‘other sheep’—that have been brought into His fold—**Jn 10:16**

d. Lord of our righteousness

1. Meaning—*the Lord is our righteousness* = ‘the one who secures our vindication’

2. Message delivered during reign of King Zedekiah

- a. Reigned 597-587—succeeding nephew Jehoiachin at time of his deportation
- b. Name means— *The Lord is righteous* or *The Lord is my righteousness*
- c. So—Jeremiah’s prophecy is a repudiation of Zedekiah—as unfit for the name
- d. The Divine King—will be opposite of Zedekiah

e. New Testament applications

- 1. Christ is the righteousness of God [and sanctification/redemption]—**I Cor 1:30**
- 2. We become the righteous of God in Him—**II Cor 5:21**

**E. AN EVEN GREATER RESTORATION—A GREATER NATION**

*7 “Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when they will no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ 8 but, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.*

1. RESTORATION PROPHESED EARLIER—see **16:14-21**

2. HISTORICAL FULFILLMENT

- Return from Babylonian Captivity—beginning 538 BC—under Zerubabel

3. MESSIANIC PROPHECY

- a. Prophetic formula—*behold, the days are coming*
- b. Fulfilled in inauguration of Messianic Kingdom of God

- Which—in turn—has eclipsed the restoration after Babylonian Captivity
- Not yet finished—Christ’s Second-coming—will eclipse it all!

#### **IV. INVITATION**

##### **LIVING STONES**