

## “RUIN, REDEMPTION, AND RESTORATION”

### Studies in the Book of Jeremiah

#### Jeremiah 26:1-24

#### “Trial of Faith”

**Introduction:** King Josiah was the last godly leader of the Southern Kingdom. Sadly, the kingdom only lasted another 23 years after the death of King Josiah before it was destroyed by the Babylonians. The Lord God Almighty sent prophets to call the people to repentance.

#### I. The Opportunity for Repentance (Jeremiah 26:1-6)

- A. Eliakim was placed on the throne by Pharaoh Neco, who changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. King Neco allowed Judah to maintain self-governance with the imposition of a tribute. It is in the context of this brief period of Egyptian domination that this passage takes place. Jeremiah is sent by God to stand in the court of the Lord's house (the Temple in Jerusalem). The Temple had different sections, and this court is the outer court where the general crowds gathered. God sends Jeremiah to the religious people to call them to repentance.
- B. The book of Jeremiah does not flow in chronological order. At this point the people still had the option to repent and avoid disaster. This is a demonstration of the long suffering of God. Justice requires God to deal with wickedness and disobedience. Mercy allows God to bear long with sinners providing opportunities to turn and be saved. The primary sin of the people was idolatry. They were not listening to God, they were not walking in God's law, they did not heed the words of the prophets.
- C. God in His love and mercy sent His servants the prophets to call the people to repentance. There were false prophets at that time leading people astray. The existence of false prophets did not cancel the fact that there were also real prophets sent by God.

#### II. Jeremiah on Trial (Jeremiah 26:7-19)

- A. The spiritual leaders were supposed to proclaim God's word. Instead of leading the people in repentance they led the people in resistance. They wanted to kill Jeremiah because they did not like his message. Jeremiah was simply being obedient to speak what God told him to speak.
- B. Gates in ancient culture served as places of legal and civil activities. The princes settled at the gate to officially act as judges of the conflict between Jeremiah and the priests and prophets. The priests and prophets submitted the charge that Jeremiah prophesied against the city. Jeremiah challenged them to amend their ways and doings so they could escape the coming judgement.

Jeremiah proclaimed his innocence. Bringing innocent blood on the people and the city was a serious charge. The princes sided with Jeremiah and refuted the sentence of death because they believed Jeremiah spoke in the name of the Lord. Some of the elders defended Jeremiah and quoted the prophet Micah, who prophesied a similar message during the reign of King Hezekiah. The elders warned that if they kill Jeremiah they are doing evil against themselves.

### **III. Suffering for Righteousness Sake (Jeremiah 26:20-24)**

- A. Urijah was a contemporary of Jeremiah. He proclaimed a similar message of warning against the sin of the people. Urijah fled to Egypt when his life was threatened. Jehoiakim sent men to bring Urijah back to Judah. Urijah suffered persecution for righteousness' sake.
- B. Ahikam advocated for Jeremiah (he could be one of the people who consulted the prophet Hulda on behalf of King Josiah - 2 Kings 22:14). This passage records the trials of two prophets. One escaped death and continued to endure hardship while proclaiming God's word. The other was executed for simply obeying God.

**Do you trust God with your life? “He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.” (Matthew 10:39)**

Dr. Erin Daniel Bell

Sunday, March 22, 2026