

## Small Group Guide: The Book of Jeremiah



### Opening Prayer

Begin your time together in prayer, asking God to help you understand His Word and apply it to your lives, even when the message is difficult.

### Introduction (5-10 minutes)

- Have someone summarize the main points of the sermon in 2-3 minutes
- Ask: "What stood out to you most from this teaching on Jeremiah?"

### Key Themes from the Sermon

#### 1. God's Calling Despite Our Inadequacy

**Key Passage:** Jeremiah 1:4-8

#### Discussion Questions:

- Jeremiah felt too young and insignificant for God's calling. What excuses do we make when God calls us to something difficult?
- How does knowing that God chose us "before the womb" change how we view our purpose and calling?

- Share a time when you felt inadequate for something God was calling you to do. What happened?

**Application:** Identify one area where you feel God might be calling you but you've been making excuses. Share it with the group for prayer and accountability.

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## 2. The Burden of Truth

**Key Passage:** Jeremiah 20:7-9

### Discussion Questions:

- Jeremiah said God's word was "like a burning fire" in his bones that he couldn't hold back. Have you ever felt that urgency to share truth with someone? What happened?
- Why do you think Jeremiah continued preaching even when no one listened and everyone hated him?
- In what ways do we experience pushback today when we share God's truth? How should we respond?

**Key Takeaway:** *When we truly encounter God's truth, it becomes impossible to keep silent, even when sharing it costs us something.*

**Application:** Is there someone in your life who needs to hear God's truth from you? What's holding you back from sharing it?

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## 3. The Danger of Refusing to Repent

**Key Passages:** Jeremiah 4:3-4; 15:1-4

### Discussion Questions:

- The people of Judah had multiple opportunities to repent but refused. What are some modern ways we resist God's call to repentance?
- God eventually said, "Even if Moses and Samuel stood before me, I wouldn't relent." What does this teach us about the seriousness of persistent rebellion?
- How do we balance God's patience and mercy with His judgment and justice?

**Key Takeaway:** *God offers mercy and opportunities to repent, but there comes a point when judgment arrives. We shouldn't presume on God's patience.*

**Application:** Are there areas in your life where God has been calling you to repent? Don't wait—respond today.

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#### 4. Faithful in "Failure"

**Key Insight:** From a worldly perspective, Jeremiah's ministry was a complete failure—no one listened, no one repented, everyone hated him.

**Discussion Questions:**

- How do you define "success" in your spiritual life? How might God define it differently?
- Jeremiah was faithful to deliver God's message even though the results seemed terrible. What does this teach us about obedience versus outcomes?
- Have you ever felt like your faithfulness to God wasn't producing visible results? How did you handle it?

**Key Takeaway:** *Faithfulness to God's calling is success, regardless of worldly outcomes. Our job is obedience; results are God's responsibility.*

**Application:** Identify one area where you've been measuring success by results rather than obedience. How can you shift your perspective?

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#### 5. Context Matters: Jeremiah 29:11

**Key Passage:** Jeremiah 29:10-13

**Discussion Questions:**

- Many people quote Jeremiah 29:11 as a personal promise of prosperity. What was the actual context of this verse?
- Why is it important to read Bible verses in their proper context?
- How does understanding the context (a letter to captives facing 70 years in Babylon) actually make God's promise more meaningful?

**Key Takeaway:** *The Bible is for us, but not all of it is written directly to us. Context matters, and understanding it deepens our appreciation of God's character.*

**Application:** Choose one commonly quoted verse you've seen taken out of context. Study it this week in its proper context and share what you learn next time.

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## 6. Judgment Doesn't Last Forever

**Key Passages:** Jeremiah 29:10-14; 30:7-11

### Discussion Questions:

- Even in the midst of pronouncing judgment, Jeremiah pointed to future restoration. What does this reveal about God's character?
- The sermon mentioned that this judgment foreshadowed the Great Tribulation and the return of Christ. How does understanding God's faithfulness in the past strengthen our hope for the future?
- How can we hold both God's justice and His mercy in tension without minimizing either one?

**Key Takeaway:** *God is both perfectly just and perfectly merciful. He disciplines those He loves but always has a plan for restoration.*

**Application:** If you're going through a difficult season, how might God be using it to refine you? Look for His redemptive purposes even in hard times.

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## Practical Applications for the Week

Choose 1-2 of these to focus on:

1. **Embrace Your Calling:** Stop making excuses about why God can't use you. Take one step this week toward something you believe God is calling you to do.
2. **Share the Truth:** Identify someone who needs to hear God's truth from you and commit to having that conversation this week, even if it's uncomfortable.
3. **Examine Your Heart:** Set aside 30 minutes for honest self-examination. Are there areas where you've been resisting God's call to repentance? Confess and turn from them.

4. **Study Context:** Pick a favorite Bible verse and study it in its full context this week. Journal about what you discover.
  5. **Pray for Perseverance:** If you're in a season where your faithfulness doesn't seem to be producing results, pray daily for the strength to continue being obedient regardless of outcomes.
  6. **Remember God's Faithfulness:** Make a list of times God has kept His promises to you in the past. Use this to strengthen your faith in His future promises.
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### **Closing Reflection**

**Final Question:** Jeremiah's message was difficult, and his life was hard, but he remained faithful because God's word burned within him. What would it look like for God's word to burn that strongly in your life?

### **Closing Prayer**

Pray together:

- For courage to obey God even when it's costly
- For hearts that can't hold back God's truth
- For genuine repentance in areas where we've been resistant
- For faith to trust God's promises for the future
- For perseverance to remain faithful regardless of results

## 5-Day Devotional: Hearing God's Voice in Hard Times



### Day 1: Called Before You Were Born

**Reading:** Jeremiah 1:4-10

**Devotional:** Before Jeremiah was born, God knew him and set him apart for a specific purpose. When God called, Jeremiah felt inadequate—too young, too inexperienced. Yet God's response was clear: "Do not say, 'I am a youth.'" Your calling isn't dependent on your qualifications but on God's faithfulness. He promises to be with you and put His words in your mouth. Today, consider how God has uniquely prepared you for His purposes. What insecurities hold you back from fully stepping into what God has called you to do? Remember, God doesn't call the equipped; He equips the called. Your weaknesses become the canvas for His strength.

## **Day 2: When God's Word Burns Within**

**Reading:** Jeremiah 20:7-11

**Devotional:** Jeremiah reached a breaking point. Mocked daily, rejected by everyone, he decided to quit speaking for God. "I will not make mention of Him," he declared. But something remarkable happened—God's word became "like a burning fire shut up in my bones." He couldn't hold it back. Have you ever tried to suppress what God has placed in your heart? The truth is, once you've encountered God's reality, silence becomes more painful than speaking. The gospel message is too good, too urgent, too life-changing to contain. When sharing your faith feels costly, remember Jeremiah's experience: the burden of silence outweighs the cost of obedience.

## **Day 3: Judgment and Mercy**

**Reading:** Jeremiah 15:1-6; 29:10-14

**Devotional:** God's judgment is real and serious. Jeremiah warned Judah repeatedly, but they refused to listen until judgment stood at their gates. Yet even in judgment, God's mercy shines through. To those who surrendered and went into captivity, God promised restoration after 70 years. The famous verse "I know the plans I have for you" comes in this context—not as a prosperity promise, but as hope beyond judgment. God's discipline is never His final word. When you face consequences for past choices, remember that God's plans include "a future and a hope." Judgment doesn't negate His love; it often redirects us toward His redemptive purposes. Restoration is coming.

#### **Day 4: Planted Where You Don't Want to Be**

**Reading:** Jeremiah 29:4-9

**Devotional:** "Build houses and dwell in them. Plant gardens." God's instruction to the exiles seems counterintuitive. They were captives in a foreign land, yet God told them to settle in, invest, and even pray for Babylon's peace. Sometimes God plants us in difficult circumstances not as punishment but as purpose. Your current season—whether it's a challenging job, a difficult relationship, or an unexpected location—may be exactly where God wants you. Instead of constantly seeking escape, what if you asked, "How can I serve God here?" Seek the peace of the place where God has planted you, because in its peace, you will find your peace.

#### **Day 5: A Future King on David's Throne**

**Reading:** Jeremiah 30:7-11

**Devotional:** Jeremiah looked beyond the immediate judgment to an ultimate restoration. He prophesied about "the time of Jacob's trouble" and promised that God would raise up "David their king"—a clear reference to the coming Messiah. Every promise God made about Babylon's conquest came true. Every promise about the 70-year return was fulfilled. This gives us confidence that the unfulfilled promises—Jesus' return, the restoration of all things, the establishment of His eternal kingdom—are equally certain. When present circumstances seem overwhelming, lift your eyes to the bigger story. God's redemptive plan spans generations. He is faithful to complete what He has begun.