

# THE SPIRITUAL STRUGGLES OF JEREMIAH

## Introduction

- 1) **Jeremiah** is known as the “weeping prophet” (see Jer. 9:1; Lam. 1:16; 3:48-49)
- 2) He saw and experienced numerous difficult times in his life of service to God
  - a) Prophesied during last, sad, turbulent days of the kingdom of Judah leading into its captivity
- 3) We will experience the difficulties and struggles of life from time to time
- 4) Jeremiah’s example can be helpful to us in dealing with our struggles so that we may overcome with faith and hope in our God who loves and cares for us (Jas. 5:10-11a)

## I) **HESITANCY WHEN CALLED** (Jeremiah 1:4-10)

- A) When God called him to serve, Jeremiah felt he could not because he was a “youth”
  - 1) God does not want humility or fear to become an excuse to hide behind!
- B) Young people can offer much in service to God (e.g. Joseph, Esther, Daniel, Timothy, etc.)
  - 1) Youth is an excellent time to enjoy life responsibly and serve God (Eccl. 11:9)
- C) Young people can understand God’s word and teach it to others; be humble, yet active
  - 1) Can live as a godly example before others (language, dress, purity, etc. 1 Tim. 4:12)

## II) **OPPOSITION FROM OTHERS** (Jeremiah 1:13-19)

- A) Jeremiah was warned that God’s people would oppose his preaching
  - 1) This certainly happened (cf. Jer. 20, 26, 28, 36-38)
- B) Opposition is never pleasant; it is tempting to avoid opposition by changing the message
  - 1) We must trust God and “not diminish a word” – Preach book, chapter, and verse
  - 2) Our goal is not to please people, but to please God (cf. Gal. 1:10; Rom. 12:2)

## III) **SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION** (Jeremiah 20:7-12)

- A) Jeremiah struggled with stress, mood swings, and depression that almost caused him to give up; he was a man of strong emotions and feelings (cf. 4:19; 8:18, 21; 9:1; 15:10)
  - 1) Ridicule for preaching unpopular message is hard to bear; tempted to avoid this by quitting
- B) His faith and love for God and His word would not let him quit!
  - 1) Not be ashamed, but preach in spite of opposition; it must be spoken! (cf. Ezek. 2:4-5)
  - 2) Still was a difficult, ongoing struggle (Jer. 20:14-18), but strong faith provides stability

## IV) **CHALLENGE OF FALSE DOCTRINES AND TEACHERS** (Jeremiah 28)

- A) False prophet Hananiah tried to destroy Jeremiah’s teaching/prophecy (vv. 3-4)
  - 1) Offered a more pleasing message (a shorter time [2 yrs vs. 70 yrs] under Babylon’s yoke)
  - 2) Publicly tried to humiliate Jeremiah and mock his prophecy
- B) Jeremiah did not change his message, but warned that a message of “peace” when there is danger is not proper (vv. 8-9; cf. 6:13-14; Ezek. 33:6)
- C) Should not support those who will *not* teach the whole doctrine of Christ today (2 Jn. 9-11)
  - 1) Many seek peace and unity at the expense of truth – false unity!

## Conclusion

**Jeremiah** was a godly man who had to deal with real troubles and problems like we do. His example encourages us to overcome these struggles with steadfast faith (see Jer. 17:14-18). His life was not easy but was successful in standing for truth and serving God. Obey and serve God faithfully today!