



Wednesday in the Word

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Questions Jeremiah Answered

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All Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Version of the Bible.

To listen to MP3s of Jeremiah lectures: <http://www.wednesdayintheword.com/jeremiah/>

For study resources, maps, and background information:
<http://www.wednesdayintheword.com/jeremiahresources/>

Lesson 1 - Jeremiah 1:1-3

1. For an overview of the book, read: <http://www.raystedman.org/old-testament/jeremiah>
2. Read chapter 1. Note key words (e.g. "word of the Lord"; "thus says the lord").
3. What do we know about Jeremiah from chapter 1?
4. Locate Anathoth on the map. Where is it in respect to Jerusalem? What do you learn about it from Joshua 21:13-19?
5. Using the charts at the end, through how the reign of which kings' did Jeremiah preach?
6. What is significant about the phrase "until the exile" (vs. 3)?
7. Read Deuteronomy 4:25-31. How God will enforce the covenant?
8. What do we have in common with the people of Jeremiah's time? Compare and contrast the situation in Judah with the situation today.

Lesson 2 - Jeremiah 1:4-19

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how").
2. Read Jeremiah 52 looking for the historical context. (Chaldeans is another name for Babylonians). What year does Nebuchadnezzar begin to besiege Jerusalem? Why does Nebuchadnezzar do this? What happens to Zedekiah? What happens in and to Jerusalem?
3. What did God appoint Jeremiah to do? To whom? When?
4. Look up and define the 3 verbs in 1:5: "knew" (Strong's H3045); "consecrate" (Strong's H6942); and "appoint" (Strong's H5414).
5. Explain Jeremiah's objections (vs 6) in your own words.
6. Explain God's response (vs. 7-10) to Jeremiah's complaints in your own words.
7. Who is "they" in verses 15-16? Who is "they" in vs 17-19? Same or different?
8. What do the two visions (vs 11-12 and vs 13-16) mean? How do they explain the message Jeremiah spoke?

Lesson 3 - Jeremiah 2:1-13

1. Read through all of chapter 2 for context. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how").
2. Mark key words and repeated ideas/phrases. When you see "*I, me, they, them, you, your, we, our,*" make sure you know who is speaking or being referred to. The context will tell you.
3. Summarize the progression of thought in each paragraph (2:1-3; 4-8; and 9-13).
4. Jeremiah 2:13 says God's people have committed two evils. What are they?
5. How does Jeremiah 2:14-19 expand on Jeremiah 2:13? What is the problem? What are the people turning from and turning to?
6. The Lord compares Himself to living water. Look up the following verses and their contexts and note what you learn about living water: Psalm 36:5-9; Isaiah 55:1; John 4:13-14; John 7:37-39; Revelation 22:17
7. Summarize Jeremiah 2 in two or three sentences.

Lesson 4 - Jeremiah 7:1-15

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how").
2. Mark key words & phrases. Note the repeated words especially: temple (or house); deceptive (deceit, lying).
3. What brought Judah to this point? (See 2 Kings 16:1-4; 2 Kings 21:1-9; 2 Kings 23:4-12)
4. In verse 4 the Lord says "amend your ways and deeds". How and what does God expect them to change? Why?
5. Compare with Micah 6:8.
6. What is significant about Shiloh? (Joshua 18:1; Judges 18:31; 1 Samuel 1:3; 1 Samuel 4:1-22.) Find it on a map.
7. Read Psalm 78 (particularly 54-60). What does this add to your understanding of Shiloh and Jeremiah 7?
8. Compare with 2 Chronicles 7:12-22. What does this add to your understanding of the temple and Jerusalem.

Lesson 5 - Jeremiah 17:1-11

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how").
2. When you see "*I, me, they, them, you, your, we, our,*" make sure you know who is speaking or being referred to. The context will tell you. Analyze the poem looking for patterns and keywords like heart, trust(s)
3. Look up and define: "heart" (Strongs H3820); "trust(s)" (Strongs H982).
4. For "trust(s)" see also: Jeremiah 2:37; 5:17; 7:4; 7:8; 7:14; 9:4; and 13:25.
5. Compare and contrast Jeremiah 17 with Psalm 1.
6. Read 2 Kings 21. What did you learn about Manasseh (the king who preceded Josiah) and life in the southern kingdom?
7. Read 2 Kings 22:14-20 and note the message Huldah gives Josiah. Is judgment inevitable? What can stop or delay God's judgment?

Lesson 6 - Jeremiah 17:19-27

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. Note the conditional statements ("If - then") and list the conditions and consequences in your own words.
3. Review what the Old Testament teaches about the Sabbath: in Genesis 2:1-4;
4. in Exodus 20:8-11; Exodus 31:21-17;
5. in Leviticus 23:1-3; Numbers 15:32-36; Deuteronomy 5:12-15
6. According to the passages above and Jeremiah 17, what does breaking the Sabbath indicate?
7. What do the Sabbath passages teach you about God?

Lesson 7 - Jeremiah 18:1-17

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. Note the conditions and consequences in verses 5-11,
3. How will Judah respond (verse 11)?
4. Based on their response, what will God do?
5. Compare and contrast with Isaiah 29:16; Isaiah 45:9; Romans 9:18-24
6. What does God want His people to know about Himself? About the nations? About Israel?
7. State in your own words the lesson of the potter.

Lesson 8 - Jeremiah 20:7-18

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. Read Jeremiah 19:1-20:6. What is going to happen to Jerusalem?
3. Who is Pashur? What does he do to Jeremiah? What will happen to him?
4. Compare 20:7-18 with Jeremiah's call in chapter 1. Could Jeremiah have predicted where he would be now and what he would be asked to proclaim?
5. Look up and define "prevail" (Strong's H3201).
6. From your observations above, why might Jeremiah be at such a low point?
7. Jeremiah is wrestling with the question "why is my life so hard?". What answers do you see in this section?

Lesson 9 - Jeremiah 23:1-8

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. Read chapter 22. How does Jeremiah 23:1-8 fit into the context of chapter 22?
3. Who are the shepherds and what have they done wrong? Compare and contrast with Ezekiel 34.
4. Who is the remnant in verse 3? Compare with Jeremiah 24; Isaiah 1:9; Micah 4:7; 7:18
5. State in your own words what the Lord declares in verses 5-6.
6. List everything you learn about "the righteous branch" in these verses. Compare with Isaiah 11.
7. Who do you think "the righteous branch" is and why?

Lesson 10 - Jeremiah 23:9-32

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. What was the spiritual state of Judah at this time? (See 2 Kings 21:3-7; 2 Kings 23:4-7; and Ezekiel 8.)
3. List everything you learn about the prophets in verses 9-22. Where are they from? What are they doing and saying? What is the result?
4. What are God's instructions regarding the prophets? How is God going to respond (vs 23-32)? (Note the 3 repetitions of "Looks I am against the prophets" vs 30-32).
5. What's the significance of the repetition of "Yahweh's word" (vs 23, 2Xs in vs 24; vs 28; vs 29; vs30; vs 31; vs 32)?
6. From clues in this passage, compare and contrast true prophets with false prophets. (See also Deut. 13:1-3; Zech 10:2)

Lesson 11 - Jeremiah 29:1-14

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. Who are the recipients of this letter? (See Jeremiah 46:2; Daniel 1:1-7; 2 Kings 24:12-17; 2 Chronicles 36:6)
3. Read through chapters 27-28 looking for what the false prophets said about the exile contrasted with what Jeremiah said the exile.
4. Compare with Jeremiah's other promises of restoration: 30:3; 30:18; 31:23; 32:44; 33:7; 33:11; 33:26; 48:47; 49:6; 49:39.
5. Compare the promises in Jeremiah 29:10-14 with Deuteronomy 30:3-5.
6. What did you learn about promise or restoration? What will fulfillment of this promise look like?

Lesson 12 - Jeremiah 31:31-34

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. Read and briefly outline chapter 31 for context.
3. This is the only mention of the "new covenant" in the Old Testament. Define the word "covenant" (Strong's H1285) in your own words.
4. Compare with Ezekiel 36:22-28.
5. Compare with some New Testament references to the "new covenant." (For example: Luke 22:20; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:6-13; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24)
6. What is the new covenant? Who makes the covenant with whom?
7. What makes the new covenant different than the old covenant?

Lesson 13 - Jeremiah 32:1-15

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. In verses 7-8, what is the "right of redemption"? (See Genesis 13:14-17; Leviticus 25:23-28.)
3. The 10th year of Zedekiah is 587 BC. What's happening in Jerusalem when this message is given? What's the significance of the Lord speaking this message at that moment?
4. Read all of chapter 32 before answering the following: Why is the Lord taking the people out of the land?
5. What does God promise in this chapter? What will He do later and why?
6. How will God solve the problem that brought about their judgment? (Be as specific as the text.)
7. Why do you think the Lord told Jeremiah to buy the field?

Lesson 14 - Jeremiah 36

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. Sketch out the timeline and note the key players.
3. Compare and contrast those who listen/obey/fear with those who don't.
4. Compare and contrast the Lord's response to the key players.
5. What do you learn from Zedekiah and his actions?
6. What do you learn from Jeremiah and Baruch and their actions?
7. What do you learn about the word of the Lord?

Lesson 15 - Jeremiah 38:1-13

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases. (Chaldeans is another name for Babylonians.)
2. Read chapters 37-38 for the context and summarize the main points. Don't worry about the details.
3. For background read about the siege of Jerusalem in 2 Kings 25; 2 Chronicles 36; Jeremiah 52. What was life like in Jerusalem during the events of this chapter?
4. What message did the Lord ask Jeremiah to deliver?
5. How does King Zedekiah treat Jeremiah in these chapters? How does Zedekiah change with the circumstances?
6. How does Jeremiah respond to his changing circumstances in these chapters?

Lesson 16 - Jeremiah 50:1-20

1. Break this passage into its major sections and summarize the main point of each section. As you read answer the "5Ws and H" (who, what, when, where, why and how"). Note key words and repeated phrases.
2. Read chapters 50-51 for context. Don't worry about the details. Concentrate on the main points.
3. Why will Babylon be judged?
4. What will happen to Israel when Babylon is judged?
5. Read Daniel 5. Why happened to Babylon?
6. Re-read Jeremiah 1. How did God fulfill His promises to Jeremiah?

Key Words in Jeremiah

While the list below is not complete, these key words provide clues to the message and theme of the Book of Jeremiah. The following key words/phrases are loosely grouped together and are from the New American Standard (1995) Version. *Note: "52x/51v" means the phrase occurs 52 times in 51 verses. "3x" means the word occurs 3 times in 3 verses.*

- Word of the LORD (52x/51v - 20% of all uses of this phrase in Scripture are by Jeremiah)
- Heart/hearts (55x/48v); Faithless, faithlessness (8x/7v); Forsake (20x/18v), Forget (3x); Adultery, adulteries, adulterer (9x); Rebel, rebellious, rebellion (6x); Wicked, Wickedness (34x/30v), Evil/evils (53x/47v); Sin, sins, sinned (26x/25v), Iniquity, iniquities (24x/23v); Idol, images, gods, Baal (64x/56v).
- Woe (13x), Wrath (19x/18v); Famine (33x/30v); Calamity (27x); Destroy (56x/52v); Pluck (4x); Uproot (8x/6v).
- Babylon (169x in 149v - more than all other uses in Scripture combined); Nations/Gentiles (60x/55v)
- Covenant (24x/21v); Everlasting (10x/9v); Love (14x/13v); Hope (6x); Compassion (7x/6v); Lovingkindness (5x).
- Faithful/faithfulness (3x); Trust, trusted, trusting (18x/17v); Listen, hear, heed (96x); Remember (14x/13v), Return (35x/29v), Repent (6x), Turn/Turned Back (20x).
- Restore (18x); Heal/healed/healing/health (21x/15v); Plant (17x/15v); Build (12x).

How to look up a word using Strong's numbers:

- 1) Go to Strong's online: <http://biblehub.com/strongs.htm>
- 2) Scroll down to "Englishman's concordance".
- 3) Enter the Strong's number in the appropriate box. (The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek.) For example, to look up the Hebrew verb "knew" (Strong's H3045), enter 3045 in the Hebrew Box.
- 4) Read through the list of English words which translate this word, looking for the range of meaning.
- 5) Scroll down to the heading "Strong's Exhaustive Concordance" for a summary of the meaning.
- 6) With the range of meaning and the root meaning, decide what the word means in the specific context you are studying.

You may also use your favorite bible study software (mine is e-sword: <http://www.e-sword.net/>) or use a physical concordance.

Small Group Discussion Questions

Jeremiah 1:1-3

- How have you experienced failure in your life? What was your response?
- How do you want God to speak into your current circumstance?
- How have you seen God bring something good out of a past disaster?
- What encouragement do you need right now to see God provide hope in the midst of painful circumstances?

Jeremiah 1:4-10

- Do you think Jeremiah's complaints were reasonable? Why or why not?
- Does God's response to Jeremiah's complaints satisfy you? Why or why not?
- Has God revealed a clear calling or purpose to you? If so, how did you find it? If not, what would help you find it?
- In what ways do you tend to look to yourself to figure out your purpose and identity? In what ways do you tend to allow others to define your purpose and identity?

Jeremiah 2:1-13

- Considering the areas where you struggle with sin, do you feel more like a faithless bride or a delinquent employee?
- What are some of the "broken cisterns" that you are tempted to substitute for God?
- Why do you find God hard to believe in? What "wrong" do you find in the Lord?
- What are some ways you can be supported in your doubts? How can you support others?

Jeremiah 7:1-15

- In what ways do you find yourself focusing on association with the things of God as a central part of your faith?
- What would it look like for you to express allegiance to God? How does that get expressed in your life?
- Has God taken anything away from you that gave you a false sense of relationship with Him?

Jeremiah 17:1-11

- Do you tend to think of sin more as an activity or as a condition?
- In your life, how are you aware of the deep effects of sin in your heart?
- How are some of the sinful behaviors you struggle with evidence of rebellion against God?
- What does the image of the tree in Jeremiah 17:8 evoke in you?

Jeremiah 17:19-27

- Why do people today find it so hard to rest? What helps you rest?
- What connection is there between resting and your relationship with God?
- What circumstances in your life have reminded you of your need to depend on God?

Jeremiah 18:1-17

- What ideas do you usually associate with the idea of God's sovereignty?
- What events have caused you to accuse God of not being fair?
- Does this passage make you want to turn toward God or away from God? Why?

Jeremiah 20:7-18

- When you feel depressed or angry or lonely, what do you do with those emotions?
- Are you afraid to express negative emotions to God? To other Christians? Why or why not?
- Does God's response to Jeremiah in 15:19-21 satisfy you? How does God's presence help in the midst of pain?
- Is this answer compelling to a world that doesn't know God? Why or Why not?

Jeremiah 23:1-8

- Who are today's shepherds? How do you know?
- What do you think God would say to today's shepherds? Both nationally and in your local church?
- Have you ever had a "shepherd" in your life who let you down? What did you learn from that experience?
- Given the state of our nation today, does this passage give you hope or comfort? Why or why not?

Jeremiah 23:9-32

- Who do you think today's "false prophets" are? Why?
- How can you recognize "false prophets" today? What gives them away?
- Who do you think today's "true prophets" are? How do you know?
- In your own life, how do you recognize what is "God's voice" and what isn't?

Jeremiah 29:1-14

- If you were sent into exile as the Jews had been, would your tendency have been to isolate yourself and wait for it to be over? Or engage with the difficulty of your present circumstance?
- What does it look like for you to find the balance that includes hoping for God's work of redemption and accepting your current circumstances?
- In what ways do you tend to err: forgetting to hope for something better? Or despairing in depression over your current situation?
- What helps encourage you when you err this way?

Jeremiah 31:31-34

- What image or metaphor would you use to describe your relationship with God?
- What does the imagery of a new covenant evoke for you?
- How have you experienced God's law written on your heart?
- Verse 34 describes equality based on forgiveness of sins. How have you seen that dynamic in your own life?

Jeremiah 32:1-15

- How can you relate to Jeremiah's situation of living in Jerusalem while it's under siege and having the knowledge that it will be destroyed?
- How does Jeremiah's action of purchasing a field represent the hope of God's promise to His people?
- What things in your life communicate that hope in the midst of your circumstances?
- What are concrete ways that we can symbolically communicate hope to our culture like Jeremiah did to his?

Jeremiah 36

- What part has the Bible played in your faith so far?
- When has the Bible spoken to you in an especially powerful way? What did you learn?
- How do you react to the persistence of the Word of God and God's promise that it will always fulfill its intended purposes?

Jeremiah 38:1-13

- Have you ever experienced a negative consequence after doing what you were convinced was the right thing in God's eyes?
- How does persecution from within the community of faith affect your trust in God?
- Is it surprising that a foreigner is the one who rescues Jeremiah? Does this resonate with your experience in any way?

Jeremiah 50:1-20

- Do you think our culture today believes in evil anymore?
- Why do you think people today are uncomfortable with the idea that God's enemies will be punished?
- What does God's determination to punish Israel's enemies say about His character?
- How does Christ's death fit into God's desire for justice?